

LOCAL PLANNING GUIDANCE
for
MISSOURI WORKFORCE INVESTMENT REGIONS
Program Years 2005-2006

This document is designed to give the local workforce investment boards and their staff the guidelines for developing local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) plans for Program Years 2005 and 2006. Current local plans will be extended until September 30, 2005, when the state anticipates completing the review and approval process of these new plans.

According to WIA, local plans shall be consistent with the state plan. Therefore, the state is asking that the “Local Plan Content and Format” listed below (which follows the state plan) be used in the development of these plans.

While the WIA-mandated requirements are the same as those used for the current local plans, emphasis should be placed on how the system has improved and can meet Governor Matt Blunt’s vision for workforce investment, as well as the new national strategic direction.

Governor Blunt’s top priorities include emphasizing Missouri as a business-friendly state that develops family-supporting jobs, providing the best education for our children, and making state government more efficient and effective at providing services to our citizens.

President George W. Bush’s goals for the workforce investment system include realizing the reforms envisioned by WIA, to include: an integrated, seamless service delivery; a demand-driven system governed by business-led workforce boards; maximum flexibility in service delivery; customers making informed choices; increased fiscal and performance accountability, and a youth program targeting out-of-school populations with increased accountability. These goals are reflected in the national direction, which has been included as Addendum A to this planning guidance.

Therefore, Governor Blunt’s vision and the national strategic direction should be reflected in the local workforce investment board’s priorities.

Local Plan Content and Format

I. Local Workforce Investment Board’s Vision

State the local board’s vision for the workforce investment region and how this vision meets, interprets and furthers the Governor’s vision and the national direction.

The Ozark Region community leaders share the Governor's recognition of the importance of education in providing a skilled workforce to equip Missouri businesses for competing successfully in the global economy.

The Missouri Regional Skills Gap Initiative was designed to encourage local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to identify and address critical labor gaps which exist in the local regions. In the Ozark Region, the findings from that survey (conducted in June '05) will become the basis for forming new partnerships with local school districts and community colleges to provide the specific training that businesses need for their job applicants.

As a part of that outreach strategy, the role of the Missouri Career Center Business Representatives will be given a renewed emphasis. Their primary task will be the determination of the specific needs of the business community in this Region. The Business Representatives are responsible for translating these needs to the WIB and the One-Stop Partners for action planning. They will also provide business with information on the services available to them through the Missouri Career Center.

According to preliminary findings, the skills recently identified as most important in this Region are consistent with the larger Missouri labor market data and quite similar to those cited in a variety of previous studies. For example,

- **Academic Skills:** reading and comprehension, math skills;
- **Social Skills:** communication, listening, working with diverse cultures and people, leadership ability, teamwork ability, phone skills/professionalism, physical appearance;
- **Workplace Skills:** acquiring and using new information, computer literacy, using resources wisely, performing technical tasks;
- **Thinking Skills:** problem-solving, decision-making, learning new skills, understanding graphs/charts;
- **Work Ethic:** attitude toward supervision, self-initiative, punctuality, and perseverance.

In the Ozark Region, we will continue the work of the Youth Council to identify appropriate initiatives for enabling Missouri's youth to achieve their educational and occupational career goals. The importance of doing so is well illustrated by this observation:

"Over 25 to 30 years, a dropout can end up costing a community as much as \$500,000 in public assistance, health care and incarceration costs. Conversely, earning a high school diploma can add almost \$500,000 in earning power over a worker's career." (from USA Today, June 18, 2003, Education Article, pg. 6D)

The State Board (MTEC) has developed a series of recommendations for long-term education priorities. We support each item in the series and have special

interest in the one which states, “a comprehensive public awareness initiative must be deployed to raise Missourians’ aspirations and expectations for education and training, and their relation to personal economic prosperity and growth”.

We, likewise, look forward to the publication in March, 2006, of the recommendations of the Government Reform Commission which was charged by the Governor, early in 2005, to look at each State Department in terms of efficiency and focused goals or duties. In this process, special attention is being directed to the matter of integration of services and effective utilization of federal resources.

As noted in our current plan of services, “through the planning and commitment of a multi-agency group of community-minded leaders, we have come to understand and appreciate the necessity of focusing on integration of services, customer choice, universality of access and accountability”.

Therefore, we intend to actively continue our strategies for creating a seamless, customer-oriented service delivery system in the Ozark Region by providing cross training of existing staff, use of technology to link partner agencies and the identification and utilization of additional community resources.

Our long-range goals for Continuous Performance Improvement include the following:

- Coordinate efficiency of service delivery among partner agencies.
- Target specific customer needs to increase the potential of getting jobs at higher wages and improve job retention.
- Increase career placement of Unemployment Insurance, Career Assistance Program (CAP) and Veteran customers through Division of Workforce Development programs and services.
- Increase customer satisfaction using the results of customer satisfaction surveys.
- Identify and develop additional funding for Missouri Career Center services.

In its most recent Strategic Planning exercise, the Ozark Region WIB also established a set of guiding principles as the foundation for all future goal setting activities.

- Work enhances the quality of life
- Collaboration is essential to community building
- Leadership requires integrity and mutual trust
- The workforce system must be realistic and responsive
- Effective workforce development results in strong economic development

As a way of being responsive to individual customers in this “demand-driven” system of service delivery, the following standards are reinforced in all training and development activities presented to our staff professionals:

- Consider the customer’s needs and point of view
- Strive to make us easier with which to do business
- Be willing to take risks for our customers
- Be friendly, enthusiastic, courteous and professional
- Treat customers as the reason for our professional existence
- Use all the resources available to you
- Make a total commitment to quality in every customer contact
- We are never too busy for a customer’s problem
- We are a Team – We make a difference

By maintaining focus on these principles, we believe the Ozark Region is prepared to measure its performance against national best practices and to sustain its place as an important element in Missouri’s integrated workforce investment system.

II. Local Workforce Investment Priorities

*Identify the workforce investment needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the local area, and how those needs were determined.**

Ozark Region is actively participating in Missouri’s Regional Skill Gap Initiative. Information gathered from these surveys will allow for more effective management and leveraging of funds. Also, the skills gap initiative will encourage partnerships with local school districts and community colleges to provide the specific training businesses or hiring entities need in their job applicants. See Skills Gap/Skills Shortage Survey Results, **Attachment 9**.

III. Local Structure

- A. *Describe the geographical workforce investment area, including the area’s major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions in the area (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.***

To evaluate the workforce investment needs for the Ozark Region, we relied primarily upon existing labor market information from the Missouri Department of Economic Development, which is referenced throughout the text. The Ozark Region Workforce Investment Area is comprised of Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney and Webster counties. The two largest economic centers in the Region are the Springfield area and the Branson area. The Ozark Region is quite diverse in its employment makeup throughout the area. There is significant employment in government, (local, state and federal) education, health care, manufacturing, and retail trade and in the tourist industry including recreation, entertainment and the hospitality industry. There are eight colleges and universities located within the Region with six of them in Springfield. According to the 2000 Census, the Region's population is 436,735 with over 50% of those living in Greene County. The largest portion of this population is White (95.1%) followed by Hispanic (1.7%), Black (1.4%), Other (1.3%) and Asian (0.7%). As with other portions of the State, Hispanic is the fastest growing ethnic group.

The U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis recently expanded Springfield's economic area to now include 27 counties across Missouri and Arkansas and more than 935,000 people. Economic Areas are used to depict the drawing power of a city, and determine to which metro area each county in the U.S. is economically tied.

B. Describe the region's economic condition, including the following information by county and the overall region:

- *average personal income level;*
- *number and percent of working-age population living at or below poverty level;*
- *unemployment rates for the last five years; and*
- *major lay-off events over the past three years and any anticipated layoffs.*

Please refer to Attachments #22, 23, and 24 that set forth economic data by County demographics and Map.

The major lay-off events over the past three years are as follows:

Fasco, Hawker; Albertsons; Northrup Grumman (several large layoffs in past three years for a combined 325 workers); Trinity; MCI; Lady Baltimore; Dayco; Faultless SBA; Sara Lee; Walker Stainless; AMS; Blue Cross/Blue Shield; Lastra; Carlisle (Dayco); and anticipated closure early in 2006: Mississippi Lime and Solo Cup.

Using the latest figure available, 2001, the average per capita personal income in the Region is \$24,554.00; this represents a 51.0% increase since 1991 and a 3.7% increase since 2000. According to 1997 figures, latest available, the number and

percent of working age population living at or below poverty level is 50,591 or 12.8% of the Region. The unemployment rate has declined over the past five years from 7.3% in January, 2001, to 3.8% in October, 2004. The rate has remained relatively level over the past year with seasonal fluctuations. There have been 84 layoffs in the past three years, 14 of which were major events involving more than 50 workers. Total workers laid off in the past three years are 3,297. Currently, we are aware of only two events that will affect an estimated 33 workers. However, this could change dramatically with a sudden downturn in the economy.

- C. *Describe the process used by the local board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan. ****

Local Board Process for Public Comment:

In accordance with procedures set forth in the Draft Local Planning Guidelines, the local Board shall:

1. Concurrent with submission of the Ozark Region's 2-Year WIA Plan of Services to the State Division of Workforce Development, cause a public notice to be published in three local papers of general circulation within the Workforce Investment Area. (Springfield News Leader; Bolivar Herald; Branson Daily News) 1 issue only. The notice shall summarize funding levels and services to be provided and provide the location at which the Plan may be reviewed in its entirety as well as the process and timeframe for commenting upon said Plan.
2. (See following notice to be published in Branson, Bolivar and Springfield Newspapers).

PUBLIC NOTICE

*TO: Springfield News and Leader, fax: 836-1147
Branson-Tri Lakes News, fax: 334-4299
Bolivar Herald, fax: 326-7643*

The Ozark Region Workforce Investment Board hereby offers public notice of its intent to submit its 2-Year WIA Plan of Services to the State Division of Workforce Development. The Plan identifies the fiscal agent/grant sub-recipient; service providers; details program activities, funding and service levels for WIA programs within the Ozark Region for the period October 1, 2005 – June 30, 2007. Anticipated program funding and service levels include: Adult \$824,753; Dislocated Worker \$772,782; Youth \$914,155; Total new funding of \$2,511,690

as outlined herein includes \$251,168 for administration of the Workforce Investment Act programs.

An estimated \$8,067 is allocated for youth occupational skill training. Potential youth occupational skill training providers must establish themselves on a Certified Provider List as a condition for receipt of funds. Resources relative to the certification process are available at <http://www.works.state.mo.us/mech> or via direct telephone contact to DESE, Employment and Training Section at 573-751-7563.

The WIA Plan of Services may be reviewed in the offices of the Missouri Career Center, 1514 S. Glenstone, Springfield, MO 65804 during normal working hours. Comments will be accepted up to 30 days from the date of this publication and should be directed to Phyllis Johnson, WIA Executive Secretary, or Dianna Devore, WIB Chair at the above address or may be submitted directly to the Mo. Division of Workforce Development, Planning and Research Section, P.O. Box 1087, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1087. Comments become public record and shall be made a part of said Plan.

The Public Comment Process outlined herein provides ample opportunity for members of the public, business, labor and other interested organizations to have input into the Plan process. Further input is achieved via WIB and CLEO review processes outlined herein.

3. Provide to the Workforce Investment Board, which is comprised of business representatives from the seven-county Workforce Investment Area, labor, education, community based organizations, mandated One-Stop Partners, and others, a copy of the Plan of Service for review and comment within the 30-day comment period.
4. Incorporate all comments that represent disagreement with the Plan into the final Plan document.

As stated herein, a Public Notice summarizing funding and service levels, plan availability, and the method and timeframes for submission of comments relative to the Plan will be run in three area newspapers. Additionally, individual copies of the Plan and Public Notice will be distributed to appropriate parties as identified herein. Comments received in response to the public notice will be submitted to the State for inclusion in the Plan.

- D. (A comprehensive one-stop center is defined in 20 CFR 662.100(c) as a physical center “that must provide the core services specified in WIA Section 134(d)(2) and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by the one-stop partners.”) ***Identify the local comprehensive one-stop center(s), including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in Attachment 1 to the local plan.***

One-Stop Delivery System:

The current One-Stop efforts in the Ozark Region are focused on fulfilling the original concept of a seamless, customer-oriented system which enables citizens to access employment, training and education services no matter where they reside in the area. Through the planning and commitment of a multi-agency group of community-minded leaders, we have come to understand and appreciate the validity of focusing on integration of services, customer choice, universality of access and accountability. Our strategies for pursuing those objectives are supported through the cross training of existing staff, use of technology to link partner agencies and the identification and - utilization of additional community resources.

Historically, the team of One-Stop Interagency Partners started working together in the fall of 1994, to provide a collaborative framework for implementing a Multi-Program Career Center under JTPA Title III auspices. This effort evolved over time into a cohesive partnership committed to the principles of the One-Stop and Workforce Investment Act philosophies. These partners are the City of Springfield Department of Workforce Development (WIA-service provider), the Missouri Division of Workforce Development, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), the Missouri Family Support Division, the Department of Higher Education (Ozarks Technical Community College), Alternative Opportunities/Lakes Country, Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (representing community based organizations), Experience Works Incorporated (Title V service provider), Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (Employment Security), and employers through the Missouri Employers Committee (MEC).

Due to the large area covered by the Ozark Region, a plan was developed that would maximize the resources available in the One-Stop to meet customer needs. Two full service centers have been established and are currently operating in Springfield and Branson, MO. (*See Attachment 1 for current mailing address, telephone and fax numbers*) Satellite offices established under the original One-Stop Career Center concept have either terminated their participation in the initiative or are unable to adequately respond to customer needs in an efficient manner.

E. Identify the one-stop partners that are physically located at the comprehensive center(s) and the services provided by these partners and list them in Attachment 1 to the local plan.

One-Stop Partners:

As part of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) implementation, the One-Stop Career Center has co-located staff of partner agencies and provides core, intensive, training and supportive services (*see Attachment 1 for a description of all services*). The new service strategy will continue the availability of computer resources and software, fax and phone connections, information and referral to other centers and/or partner agencies, etc.

Although most services will be universally available at the Career Centers, particular services or programs may be governed by agency application and eligibility requirements.

Attachment 1 reflects a compilation of the total range of services provided by the partner organizations. Some of these services are/may be available through the full-service One-Stop Career Center while others are available through referral and/or electronically. Due to the large geographic area of the Region, it is not feasible to deliver all services at all sites. However, a common goal of the partner agencies is to improve universal customer access to employment, training and related services. By working together as a team and delivering the services at various locations throughout the area, this goal can be achieved.

The local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) will ensure, manage and monitor the continuous improvement of local providers of service by having a clear understanding of the services delivered, where the services are delivered, who is delivering them, the cost to deliver the services and the goals that are to be achieved. The WIB will seek input from local employers (beyond those on the WIB) and will use that information to direct the providers of service and the partners on developing training, education and employment responses to meet those needs. Periodically, the WIB will sponsor an employer round table and invite local employers to meet with the WIB and learn about the services available and share their (local employers') concerns/ideas. This information will facilitate continued development of appropriate responses to employer/employee needs.

- F. (According to 20 CFR 662.100(d)(1), affiliate one-stop sites “can provide one or more partners’ programs, services and activities at each site.) ***Identify the local affiliate one-stop sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in Attachment 1 to the local plan.***

****Denotes WIA-Mandated Planning Requirements***

Affiliate Sites:

Not Applicable

A recent audit of affiliate site utilization by the local Affiliate Site Team resulted in a decision to terminate affiliate site agreements and pursue options for improving accessibility of services by rural customers. The decision was based primarily on the under-utilization or non-utilization of the sites; the lack of trained on-site staff to assist site customers; the age of equipment dedicated for affiliate site use; the level and cost of equipment maintenance.

The Affiliate Site Team continues its quest to identify optional methods, for serving rural customers, that are cost effective and which maximize available staff resources. The mobile classroom concept and electronic connectivity continue to be evaluated.

G. Identify the one-stop partners that are physically located at the affiliated site and the services provided by these partners and list them in Attachment 1 to the local plan.

One Stop Partners at Affiliate Sites:

Not Applicable – See Item IIIF above.

IV. Economic and Labor Market Analysis

A. Identify the current and projected employment opportunities in the local area.*

Employment is projected to increase in both goods producing and service producing industries for the Region through 2007. This is due in part to the tremendous increase in recreation/entertainment/retail opportunities in the Branson area, with the majority of this growth expected to be in retail. The fantastic growth in the Branson area continues to outpace the remainder of the State and will continue to influence growth throughout southwest Missouri.

B. Identify the job skills necessary to obtain current and projected employment opportunities.*

Continued growth is anticipated in the education and health care fields with MERIC projecting a 33% increase in health care occupations over the next 5 years.

See analysis of the Regional Skills Gap Initiative for additional information.
Attachment 9.

V. Overarching Local Strategies

A. Include the findings from the “Missouri Regional Skills Gap Analysis” planning phase, as well as any strategies that have been developed for implementing the needed training to fill these skills gaps. These findings should include high-growth, high-demand employment opportunities within the region, as defined in the national direction.

The Ozark Region continues to serve as the catalyst for the State of Missouri and its economic growth. Recently the Missouri Division of Workforce Development provided funds to the Ozark Region Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to conduct a Regional Skills Gap Planning Analysis. The WIB identified the WIB Chair, Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO) Representative, DWD Business Representative, Ozark Regional Economic Partnership, Education, AEL, local employers, labor representative and others as members of the Ozark Region “Skills Gap” Planning

Consortium (**Attachment 10**). The consortium wanted to ensure that the survey further enhance previous studies accomplished by the Ozark Regional Economic Partnership conducted by the Docking Institute dealing with the Regional Labor Skills Assessment Analysis – 2002, Labor Availability Analysis—2001, and the recent Health Occupational Skills Analysis conducted by the Partnership this past winter. The WIB contracted with Opinion Research Specialists LLC, to perform a regional skills gap and skills shortage survey (**Attachment 8**) planning analysis performed in May, 2005.

The intent of this survey is to provide a planning data base to identify present and future concerns and needs resulting from a perceived disconnect between job opportunities and job-readiness of available workers. The WIB is attempting to determine what skill gaps exist in the Ozark Region. A skill gap was defined as when individuals within the existing workforce have lower skills levels than are necessary to meet the business or industry objectives; or, where new hires lack some of the skills required for them to perform effectively. Examining skills gaps will assist the WIB focus its resources where they are needed most. With the help of Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), a random sampling of approximately 1,000 businesses was conducted by Opinion Research Specialists.

A summary of findings of the Skills Gap survey (**Attachment 9**) was presented to the WIB on July 6, 2005. Findings of the survey show an organizational response rate in the following areas:

Administrative (4%) Construction (13%), Education (1%),
Health Care (10%), Leisure and Hospitality (6%), Manufacturing (18%),
Information/Financial/Professional/Business Services (18%), (Trade –
Wholesale or Retail (27%) and, Transportation and Warehousing (4%).

Results reflect a continued growth pattern for entry level positions and a desire for current business and organizations to expand, increase production, implement quality improvements and expand the number of employees or shifts. Particular concern may be seen with a perceived decline in skilled employees and the limited potential for finding qualified unskilled employees. Continuation of basic soft skills deficiencies noted in the survey conducted by the Docking Institute in 2002, raises a concern for the WIB. But, perhaps the most alarming issue that is lifted up by this survey is that due to labor shortages or employee skill deficiencies, 59% of business surveyed indicated that they have been prevented from expanding the number of employees or shifts, 51% have been prevented from maintaining production to meet demand and 41% have been prevented from implementing productivity and quality improvement processes.

Major skill deficiencies or shortages, which are noted, will provide the Ozark Region WIB the opportunity to work with vendors to ensure training is available,

developed and warranted for the Region to continue its economic growth in a demand-driven workforce investment system.

B. Describe the local board's policy on providing apprenticeships. (Additional information regarding apprenticeships can be found in Addendum B to this planning guidance, as well as at www.doleta.gov/atels_bat.

The Ozark Region WIB does not, at this time, have a formal policy with regard to providing apprenticeships within the Region. The Board, working with local labor unions representations on the WIB and with the DOL representatives, continues to pursue opportunities that may be available with local unions and employers and apprenticeship opportunities. To encourage such opportunities, the WIB has encouraged the local program services providers to implement On-the-Job Training activities and related instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of highly-skilled occupations throughout the Region. The WIB coordinates its efforts with the Business and Industry Representative (BIR) and the Business and Training Team of the Ozark Region to work with businesses/hiring entities throughout the Region to develop new opportunities within the Ozark Region that may provide for registered apprentice, industry-driven training programs through their marketing efforts.

Since the inception of the Youth Council in the Ozark Region, the WIB has requested representation from the local Department of Labor office as part of the Council. At the present time there, are in the Springfield/Southwest Missouri area 11 apprenticeship training programs (*Attachment 12*). This list is updated as new training is made available or training programs have ended. The representations of the Union members on the WIB and the WIA Youth Providers ability to develop relationships have provided opportunities for a few WIA-eligible individuals to be referred to appropriate training opportunities. Secondarily, this relationship with DOL and Unions has enabled the program operators to make suitable direct referrals to those training programs as appropriate for non-eligible WIA participants.

VI. Major Local Policies and Requirements

- A. Identify the local area's policy for supportive services and/or needs-based payments to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities. This policy should address how resources and service coordination is managed in the local area and the procedures for referrals to services. In addition, this policy should identify:***
- How such services will be funded when they are not otherwise available from other sources;***
 - The services that may be provided;***

- *Documentation required for requesting service;*
- *The maximum amount of funding and length of time for supportive services or needs based payments to be available to participants; and*
- *Procedures (if any) established to allow one-stop operators to grant exceptions to the limits established.*

Supportive services may be required to assure workers have every opportunity to meet self-sufficiency needs to regain economic stability for themselves and their families. The Ozark Region will continue to leverage additional resources available through One-Stop partner agencies and other organizations throughout the Region. Employees have seen the positive effects of the leveraging of additional resources and they have been empowered through integration that has taken place in the Ozark Region. Information about public assistance, health services, childcare, transportation, and other community resources are provided to our customers. Staff assists customers in making application and setting appointments for such services as needed and coordinate with providers to ensure participants are making progress and that duplication has not occurred.

WIA Supportive Services are provided only after it has been determined such services are not available through other sources at no cost. Supportive services are provided only to those who are enrolled in intensive or training activities. Supportive services such as clothing, tools, equipment, gas, and counseling are specified in the customer's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and documented in Toolbox. Documentation required for requesting service, maximum amount of funding, and length of time for supportive services to be available to customers is in accordance with Ozark Region Supportive Services Policy Guidelines for Dislocated Worker, and Adult, (Attachments 13 & 14).

Needs-based payments are not provided due to funding limitations.

See Attachment 15 for WIA Youth Supportive Service Policy

B. Identify the maximum dollar amount for all supportive services combined per participant.

Dislocated Worker: \$350 per participant (lifetime)

Youth: \$500 (annual)

Adult: Due to limited funding availability, supportive services that are cost factors are limited to gas vouchers and bus passes for WIA Title 1 Adult participants. A voucher system is used to supply some supportive services which are provided free to residents of the Region through many local not-for-profit agencies.

Supportive Services expenditures are tracked for each WIA customer in the Ozark Region to ensure cost associated to the participants is allocated appropriate to the funding source.

Supportive Services expenditures will be tracked for each WIA customer in the Ozark Region to ensure participants do not go beyond their maximum dollar amount. Modifications to this policy may occur in the future depending on funding availability.

- C. *Describe the criteria to be used by the local board, under 20 CFR 663.600, to determine whether funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities under WIA sections 133(b)(2)(A) or (3) are limited, and the process by which any priority will be applied by the one-stop operator.****

The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) has stated that the Ozark Region is “the engine driving the State’s economic growth.” In the past ten years, the Ozark Region has seen an overall population growth of 25.5%, with a labor force increase of 23.1%. Between 1990 and 1999, the per capita personal income increased from \$15,221 to \$23,420 or 53.9%. At the same time, the poverty rate within the Region remained relatively constant at about 12%; thus, indicating, that, while the economy is growing, so is the number of those in poverty. The DOL formula which determines allocation of WIA funds continues to adversely affect adult funds; thus, funds are limited. Accordingly, priority or intensive and training services are given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the Region. Should funds allocated to the Ozark Region be determined by the WIB as not to be limited, the WIB established a self-sufficiency standard policy to be used to serve those individuals that are not receiving public assistance or other low-income individuals (Attachment 16).

- D. *Define the sixth eligibility criteria for youth, described in WIA section 101(13) (C) (IV) as “an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”.***

The definition of the sixth eligibility criteria for youth described in WIA Section 101 (13) (C) (IV) as “an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment”, is further defined by the local Youth Council as a youth who needs assistance to complete a secondary school education (or it’s equivalent) or a post secondary certification of two (2) years or less. Documentation may include school, counselor, or medical records, or a referral from other programs or agencies, verifying the need for assistance. In the case of employment assistance, employment records and/or work history may also be included in this documentation, i.e. UI Wage Record.

- E. *Describe how veteran’s priority, as required by Public Law 107-288, will be incorporated into all programs.***

Public Law 107-288 requires Veterans' priority in all programs funded wholly or in part by DOL. For all programs with statutory requirements, veterans will receive priority of service over non-veterans. Referral to the DVOP/LVER will not constitute priority of service. To be eligible for priority of service Veterans must meet all other program eligibility requirements.

Additionally, in those programs where targeting of groups are discretionary or optional priorities at the local level, veterans' priority takes precedence over those optional or discretionary priorities. Veterans' priority is applied in advance of the opportunities and services provided to the population group covered by the optional priority.

When local Adult and Dislocated Worker funds are limited, current WIA law requires that first priority for intensive and training services be given to public assistance recipients and low-income individuals. First to be served will be public assistance recipients or low-income individuals who are also veterans. The second group to be served will be public assistance recipients and low-income non-veterans.

Veterans will be given priority of service over all non-veterans, without regard to program eligibility, for labor exchange and core services.

F. Identify the funding limit for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

The cost, duration and use of ITAs will be established using the most recent available information from the training provider consumer reports, the training choice made by the customer, consideration of other sources of training assistance such as Pell grants, consultation from staff and other assessment results when appropriate. Training will be provided in high-demand and economically-viable occupations. In instances where similar training is available through a variety of institutions, programs offered at the least cost will be utilized. When training has been determined as an appropriate service, the training provider has been identified and funding has been obligated, the customer will be informed of the dollar amount available for their WIA ITA.

Dislocated Worker:

The ITA funding limit will be consistent with the level set by the Trade Act program in Missouri, up to \$13,000. A large percentage of Dislocated Workers in the Ozark Region are dual enrolled in the Trade Program and all precautions are taken to ensure students do not exceed this dollar amount. Dislocated Worker and Trade staff collaborates closely to make sure the worker is provided with the best mix of resources available through both programs.

Duration of ITA: The emphasis of Dislocated Worker is to return people to self-sufficiency as quickly as possible; therefore, training and credential obtainment must be complete within two years.

Cases of exception: Some ITA programs may exceed the two-year limit and maximum dollar amount for the Dislocated Worker. Registered Nurse is an example of a high-demand occupation in the Ozark Region which takes longer than two years to complete, which may exceed the ITA maximum dollar amount. Exceptions may be made on a limited basis for locally-defined high-demand occupations. Such cases will be subject to funding availability, documented in Toolbox, and approved by Dislocated Worker Supervisor.

Dislocated Worker Program ITA documentation in the Ozark Region consists of the ITA Supplemental Worksheet and the DESE 6, **Attachment 17 & 18.**

ADULT: The Ozark Region attempts to consider all available sources of funds, excluding loans, in determining an individual's overall need for WIA funds. The exact mix of funds is determined by the availability of funding for training and the goal of ensuring the cost of the training program that the participant selects are paid so that the training can be completed successfully. Focus on determination of funding is based on the needs of the participant. There is no set minimum or maximum tuition assistance prescribed with regard to WIA Title 1 Adult tuition assistance in the Ozark Region. Based on past history, the average tuition assistance for WIA Title 1 Adult has been \$1,300 to \$1,500 per semester. As dollars are limited, the WIB has determined that tuition assistance for WIA Adult Title 1 participants is limited to those fields as determined by MERIC long-term Projected SOC Occupational Employment in Ozark Region as Great, Outstanding and Good. Should a participant seek training in a field that is not classified in one of these three areas, then a statement from an employer indicating intent to hire is necessary prior to providing training dollars for approved training. WIA Adult Title 1 will begin using Individual Training Account Supplemental Worksheet beginning this program year (**Attachment 17**) as well as the continuation of the DESE 6 form (**Attachment 18**) to allocate WIA Adult Title 1 training dollars.

When possible and appropriate, dual enrollment is a consideration to maximize training dollars. Dual enrollment may be a consideration with entities and program services, such as but not limited to: Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Corps, Dislocated Worker, Trade Act, and Experience Works. As indicated earlier, one of the priorities for WIA Adult Title 1 training services is to be given to recipients of public assistance. If the individual is receiving cash assistance (Temporary Assistance – TA) the WIA Adult Title 1 program operator ensures that the participant is enrolled in the Career Assistance Program (CAP) to maximize dollars available for training prior to consideration for assistance with WIA Adult Title 1.

G. Describe how the local region will ensure that the full array of one-stop services are available to all individuals with disabilities, so that these services are fully accessible.

The WIB examined the broad range of services that were needed by all potential customers in the Ozark Region including those individuals with disabilities. With the inception of the full service One-Stop Center in Springfield, the Board was able to procure equipment via a grant from DWD. Under the direction of Vocational Rehabilitation and other entities, ensured that equipment purchased would meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and that these services were fully accessible. Purchasing decisions were made that currently accessible assistive technological equipment located within the One-Stop Career Center includes: Telephone Amplifier, Alternative Keyboards, Electronic Enlarging, Screen Enlargement Software, Trackball, and Height Adjustable Tables.

The WIB and staff continue to develop local strategies to meet the needs of disabled individuals as this is considered a labor market potential to meet present and future needs of businesses. Most recently, six staff members at the Springfield Missouri Career Center have completed a basic course provided by Lakes Country, a community-based organization, in basic sign language to facilitate services to those individuals who have hearing and speech disabilities.

State policies provide for an annual Continuous Quality Improvement review which is done on site at local Career Centers. With the reports generated from these reviews, the WIB and staff ensure the functionality and adequacies of the assistive technology equipment and its ability to meet customer needs.

H. Describe how the local region will ensure that the full array of one-stop services are available to all individuals with limited English proficiency.

The WIB and staff continue to develop local strategies to meet the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency. The availability of individuals with limited English as a labor pool continues to increase and is a viable potential to meet present and future needs of businesses. The Ozark Region works with many community based organizations that provide English as a Second Language and referrals are made to these agencies and organizations as the available labor market with limited English continues to grow. At present the full One-Stop Center has 3 persons who are fluent in Spanish. When other interpreters are needed, available community organizations and/or service providers are contacted for assistance.

I. Describe how the local region promotes integration of services through dual enrollment processes.

The Ozark Region Plan incorporates services integration policies outlined by the

State of Missouri. This framework has enabled us to increase the level of universal access, consistency of service, and instances of dual enrollments in the Region. The following processes have been put into practice in the Ozark Region to promote continuous improvement in the area of service integration and dual/multi enrollment:

1. Customer service desk/triage unit and orientation to services: Customers seeking assistance in the Ozark Region will receive immediate triage assessment. This process will incorporate the use of the enhanced GreatHires.org Internet portal and will provide immediate access to self-directed job search, labor market information and educational opportunities. Customer needs and eligibility for a variety of services are also available via triage and the enhanced electronic system.
2. Integrated intake, eligibility determination and customer tracking through Toolbox: An initial customer needs assessment will be built into the enhanced Greathires.org system. This initial assessment is available to all partners and provides the basic information to determine customer needs and eligibility of services. The Ozark Region follows the Division's policies for co-enrollment of WIA, CAP, TAA, Parents' Fair Share and all Wagner-Peyser services. Utilization of triage and the enhanced Greathires system will assist staff and customers in identifying available resources early in the job-search process and will assist in maximizing resources from all programs. When appropriate, dual/multi enrollment will be utilized to expedite the customer's training plan and leverage all funds available to help them succeed.
3. Continuous learning/training opportunities for staff and partner agency personnel to ensure all staff are knowledgeable about all Career Center Services: the Ozark Region maintains an open line of communication with the Division to ensure the flow of information necessary to meet the needs presented by our customer base. Training and technical assistance are provided staff via the annual Governor's Conference on Workforce Development, Rapid Response/Dislocated Worker and Trade Act service integration training, MAWD and NAWDP. Intra-agency teams and committees have been formed in the Region to ensure staff is knowledgeable about all center services. This collaboration has assisted us greatly in our case management activities, has provided a means for tracking service gaps and conserving resources; and has increased dual enrollment.
4. Partner staff sharing in the functions that are common to the services provided to all customers: Exploring and rethinking service delivery is an ongoing process in the Ozark Region. Cross-agency processes are evaluated to identify similar functions where consolidation can occur. This is currently being done with Trade Act and Dislocated Worker programs in the Region. Statewide Rapid Response functions have also been adjusted so a more efficient and consistent message is delivered to employers and dislocated workers.

Dual enrollment is done when it is in the best interest of the client. Every effort is made to dually enroll between the Dislocated Worker Program and Trade Act, Job Corps and WIA Youth. Veterans will be dually enrolled with any program that will best serve their needs.

J. *List the local credentials that the board has approved, to include: issuing entity, requirements to earn credential, and the expiration date (if any) of the credential.*

Our board has approved 4 local credentials relating to computer training.

Microsoft Word
Microsoft Excel
Microsoft Access
Microsoft PowerPoint

The credentials are issued by the Missouri Career Center Computer Learning Center. These credentials were approved on July 30th, 2002, and are due for review in July of 2006. At that time the supporting businesses will be asked to review the curriculum, with its additions and updates and send a letter of support for the training. The WIB will be asked to renew these credentials for another 4 years.

The computer training includes completion of 2 levels of instruction in the desired program followed by a Demonstration of Knowledge test that requires the recipient to actually demonstrate their ability to use the software program. The curriculum used is provided by Infosource Training and presented by a Missouri Certified Business Teacher. The Infosource tutorials and workbook exercises represent two levels and are designed to provide the necessary components for passing a Certified Microsoft Office User exam.

Additional information regarding the credential to include the curriculum and business letters of support can be provided upon request.

VII. Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

One of the primary expectations of the workforce system under the WIA statutory framework is a seamless, integrated One-Stop delivery system. The expectation for an integrated service delivery system remains firmly embedded as a key principle of a demand-driven workforce system. The goal of integration is to ensure that the full spectrum of community assets is used in the service delivery system to support human capital solutions for businesses, industry and individual customers.

A. *Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local region, including:*

- 1. A description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants;**

One Stop Service Delivery – Continuous Improvement:

Refer to Section III D. for a description of the Local One Stop Delivery System.

Missouri Career Center Leadership Team:

The Career Center's Leadership Team, comprised of supervisors representing all One-Stop Consortium Partners, and is committed to quality customer service. The Team meets bi-weekly for problem-solving, decision-making discussions on all facets of Career Center operations. Performance outcomes and results of customer satisfaction surveys administered by the Career Center are indicative of the advantages of dialogue and collaboration among partners working toward the common goal of continuous quality improvement.

Inter-Agency Training Opportunities:

In the fall of 2002, the Missouri Career Center's Quality Steering Committee recognized the need for and spearheaded the development of agency-wide staff training opportunities. In response to a survey of all partner-agency staff, a primary need for cross training specific to the programs, services and processes of partner agencies was identified. As an informative, fun approach to sharing information about partner agencies and identifying resources to meet customer needs, an ad-hoc Committee developed a training event called *Get a Clue* which was based on the TV show, Jeopardy. The training activity not only received accolades from participating staff but provided an ideal opportunity for them to interact and network

Variations of this creative approach to cross training are developed and conducted annually to educate and inform new partner agency staff as well as re-energize incumbent staff. This unique collaboration among diverse partners of the Career Center ensures consistent, high-quality customer service.

Comprehensive Marketing/Outreach Plan:

In July 2004, the Ozark Region was awarded \$25,000 by the Mo. Division of Workforce Development for developing the best Business Services Plan in the State. Some of the goals outlined in the Plan include: evaluation of progress and implementation of continuous improvement steps and quarterly reporting to the Workforce Investment Board; increase market penetration rate in the Ozark Region; continuous O-Net training for businesses and staff; development of seminars and materials for businesses; development of a system for tracking business contacts; sales training for staff;

GreatHires training of school personnel; continuous partner training for all aspects of the Plan; customizing and tracking usage of the Business Services Center; development of outreach marketing materials; increased marketing through use of PSAs, advertising, magazines, radio, television; continuous distribution of business CDs etc.

The award money has enabled the Career Center to design and dedicate a state-of-the-art Business Center for employers use for interviewing, internet access and related needs.

Certified Occupational Skill Training Providers:

Occupational skill training needs of WIA Youth/Adult, Dislocated Worker and Career Assistance Programs are addressed through the utilization of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Employment and Training Section, as the clearinghouse for potential occupational skills training providers, who must establish themselves on a DESE-maintained Certified Training Provider list as a condition for receipt of occupational skills training funds.

This contractual relationship has enhanced the level of occupational skill training offered through local training institutions chiefly through: (a) DESE monitoring of local education agencies' performance data, internal operations and records examination; (b) publication and maintenance of a Certified Provider List including vendor information, vendor performance status and electronic access to all relevant system information; and (c) ensuring non-duplication of grant funds by PELL grants or other financial aid. This has also proven to be a most cost effective arrangement between the two entities.

Skills Gap Analysis:

The WIB will utilize results of a Skills Gap Analysis Survey conducted in the Ozark Region, to identify present and future concerns and needs resulting from the apparent "disconnect" between job opportunities and the job-readiness of available workers. The Skills Gap Summary Report will drive efforts to more effectively target identified demands of existing and emerging employment opportunities and tailor the menu of existing services and training alternatives to ensure a ready supply of well-trained, skilled workers on a cost-effective basis.

Employer Focus Groups:

A Best Practices Business Panel was convened in September, 2004, at the Career Center to give area employers an opportunity to identify unmet employment and training needs and discuss their hiring processes. It also provided a venue for Career Center partner agencies to share with employers and potential employers the array of services they have to offer. Discussion centered around Human Resources Services, Employee Skills Training, Supportive Services to Employer Needs, Networking Opportunities, Recruitment Resources used by Employers, Wages/Benefit Packages, Employer Satisfaction with Referrals from the Career Center, Employer Use of GreatHires.org, Projected Labor Market Trends, Future Projected Workforce Needs, and related issues. Information gleaned from the exchange of information with the eight area employers who

served on the panel will enable the Career Center to more directly target the needs of the business customer. Similar focus groups may be convened in the future as a means to evaluate employer satisfaction with our responsiveness to identify needs as well as to monitor the changing needs of area employers.

Best Practices:

During a Continuous Quality Improvement Review conducted in February, 2005, by the Division of Workforce Development Continuous Improvement Team, the Springfield and Branson Career Centers received praise for their delivery of integrated services and attention to customer service. As part of the review process, the Team interviewed customers in the Career Centers to record their opinions of the quality of services provided. The Team identified eighteen (18) Best Practices and cited the local operation as “one of the best Regions we have visited in the State”. The local Career Center continues to develop innovative programs and initiatives to meet the needs of both its job seeking and business customers.

2. Describe how all partner agencies will strengthen their integration of programs and services so that it provides a more seamless system; and

Program Integration/Seamless Delivery System:

The Ozark Region has two full service centers, located in Springfield and Branson, MO. All job seeker customers have access to the full array of partner services available through the Career Centers, or by referral, including: Wagner-Peyser; WIA Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker; Career Assistance Program; Trade Act Assistance; Mo. Employment and Training Program; Migrant/Seasonal Farm Workers; Adult Education Literacy; Older Worker Program; Rehabilitation Services; Job Corp; Veterans; Vocational/Technical Training; Higher Education; Unemployment Benefits; etc. Although partner agency missions may differ slightly, they are not mutually exclusive. Likewise, employer services are universally accessible.

Customer-focus. The overall objective of the Career Center staff is to remain customer-focused—to ensure that customer needs are met while programs and funding streams remain transparent. Using a “triage/customer-driven approach” to organizing delivery of services, a quick, focused preliminary assessment of a customer’s needs becomes the basis for the provision of appropriate direction, options, and access to services. Key to this approach is that the customers initially select from available services and types of access relating to their immediate needs. To achieve seamless delivery of services, close working relationships are maintained among partner agencies; partner agency staff is cross-trained on programs and services offered; and open lines of communication ensure prompt dissemination of information.

Multi-Program Enrollment: A significant feature of the “seamless delivery” approach to customer services is the multi-program approach to enrollment/service delivery, which provides benefits to the customer by making service options available through various partner agencies, enabling customers to be an active participant in the decision-making process. By providing multiple services concurrently, expenditures become more cost-effective to one-stop partners, as agency resources are leveraged to maximize efficiency of operation.

Not only does multi-program enrollment provide direct customer benefit from the coordination of available services, it further benefits the system by fully integrating one stop partner’s services. Although multi-program enrollment is encouraged, it should be considered only when it is most appropriate for the customer.

While the State Division of Workforce Development has issued guidelines on dual enrollment, the basic premise that dual enrollment/multi-program enrollment is a valuable tool to promote integration of services, reduce duplication, improve efficiency of operation; and, most importantly, improve services to our customers is clearly delineated and encouraged system wide.

Electronic Data Sharing. Electronic connectivity has contributed greatly to the concept of providing a “seamless delivery” of flexible services which are responsive to customer needs. System wide utilization of an electronic data base enables all staff, regardless of program or funding source, to access, retrieve and/or update customer information. This common data base enables customers to avail themselves of a variety of job training, education and employment services without the need for service providers to create separate customer files.

Electronic data sharing of jobseeker customer information has been extended to include business customer information. Accessibility of Career Center staff to common business customer data bases enables them to review and edit real-time business customer data; document business customer contacts and outcomes; coordinate business customer contacts to reduce or prevent duplication of effort; and, promotes the “seamless delivery” approach, all in an effort to enhance business customer services.

This “seamless delivery” approach to business customer services is still in its infancy. However, as staff become more proficient in documenting business customer contacts utilizing the electronic data base and reviewing business customer/hiring entity information prior to setting up appointments, efficiency of operation will be achieved, both in terms of better time management by Career Center staff and by the business customer.

Marketing Strategy. A consolidated marketing strategy has been adopted and a marketing plan developed which will increase information available to employers

and minimize duplication of efforts among partner agencies. (Reference, Part Three, Page 33 Ozark Region Marketing and Outreach Plan)

In summary, information technology/equipment, improved marketing, increased inter-agency cross-training, public relations training and integration of activities are all significant elements which contribute to our overall success in providing a “seamless delivery” of services to our customers and maximize opportunities for increased performance outcomes. Our Customer Resource Center/Triage staff also plays a vital role in advancing the “seamless delivery of services concept” by quickly identifying customer needs and directing them to appropriate programs and services without regard to funding streams. We believe our commitment to collaboration, cooperation and coordination among partner staff will improve outcomes throughout the system.

Refer to Section III D for specifics on the Ozark Region One-Stop Service Delivery System which enables citizens to access employment, training and education services on a seamless, customer-oriented basis.

3. *A copy of each memorandum of understanding (between the local board and each of the one-stop partners) concerning the operation of the one stop delivery system in the local area.* (This should be included as Attachment 6 to the local plan.)*

Refer to Attachment 6 for a copy of the Ozark Region Memorandum of Understanding between the local board and One-Stop Partners.

- B. The expectation is that the local region will involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIA service providers and other stakeholders in the development and review of this plan.

Describe the plan development process, including how input for the plan was obtained by all the partners involved in the MOU.

Plan Development Process:

Planning Guidance. The Local Planning Guidance for Missouri Workforce Investment Regions for Program Years 2005-06 was distributed to all members of the Workforce Investment Board, One-Stop Partner Agencies, and the Missouri Career Center Leadership Team for the purpose of orienting them with the requirements of the Local Plan of Services.

Local One-Stop Partner Agencies and the Missouri Career Center Leadership Team were charged with the responsibility of reviewing the Planning Guidance and drafting and submitting appropriate Plan subparts to the WIB Executive Secretary for assimilation. (To ensure coordination and collaboration and that all elements and plan requirements as set forth in the Planning Guidance document were appropriately and adequately addressed,

assignments were made to appropriate partner agency staff for development and submission, based on the menu of activities and services offered through the local Career Center, areas of staff responsibility/expertise and/or job assignment.)

Upon assimilation of the draft Plan of Services by WIB support staff, copies were distributed to the WIB Committees, Youth Council and CLEO, for their review and input. Subsequent to formal Committee approval, the Plan was presented to the full WIB for approval. The WIB-approved plan was presented to the Ozark Region Council of Local Elected Officials for final review and adoption.

It is noted that the WIB is representative of the Ozark Region business community, organized labor and other community organizations. This represents a vehicle thru which input into the Plan development process is achieved. Additionally, concurrent to submission of the Plan of Services to the State Division of Workforce Development, a public notice is published in three local newspapers of general circulation within the Region. The notice briefly summarizes funding levels, program services and service levels, as well as the manner and timeframe in which the Plan document can be reviewed and comments submitted. Notices are posted on public bulletin boards at the offices of members of the Council of Local Elected Officials. Diversity organizations currently on file with the local fiscal agent/grant sub-recipient are provided notice of plan availability for review and input. All comments become part of the final plan.

VIII. Administration & Oversight of Local Workforce Investment System

A. Identify the one-stop operator(s) for the comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers in the region.

Administration/Oversight

One-Stop Operators:

Ultimate accountability and responsibility for the One-Stop Career Center System organizational processes, services, and performance rests with the WIB, and the Career Center partners.

Structure—The WIB, with concurrence of the CLEO, has designated and certified the One-Stop Operator as a Consortium of Partners for the full service One-Stop Career Center in the Ozark Region. Partners in the Consortium function by consensus. In instances where consensus cannot be reached and the functioning of the One-Stop Career Center and/or the Consortium is impaired, those members of the consortium who are parties to the dispute shall submit to the dispute resolution procedure outlined in the agreed-to Memorandum of Understanding. (Attachment 6) In addition, each Partner retains responsibility for respective reporting of required performance data and adherence to reporting schedules as determined by their respective internal systems. The Partners work collaboratively to develop financial and performance reporting systems to track and report on the outcomes, service costs, and to achieve the performance and budget objectives outlined in the Workforce Investment Act Plan. Each Partner

maintains responsibility for the management of its respective staff, equipment, finances, management information systems and customer grievance processes. Ultimate responsibility for performance and budget management is the responsibility of each Partner respectively. The One-Stop Consortium consists of the following three (3) Workforce Investment Act-required partners who are physically located on a full- time basis within the One-Stop Career Center.

City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development
Missouri Division of Workforce Development
A.O./Lakes Country Resource Centers

- B. *Identify the members of the local workforce investment board, the organization or business they represent, and the area (i.e. business, education) in Attachment 2 to the local plan.***

Please refer to Attachment 2 for the WIB Membership List

- C. *Include a copy of the local workforce investment board's current bylaws in Attachment 3 to the local plan***

Please refer to Attachment 3 for a copy of the local WIB Bylaws.

- D. *If applicable, include a copy of the region's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for any sanctions they have been given, as well as an update on the effectiveness of the PIP's strategies. The PIP should be included as an attachment to this plan.***

Please refer to Attachment 7 for a copy of the Corrective Action Plan that includes letters of transmittal to the State and responses, etc.

IX. Service Delivery

A. One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies

Describe how the local region is assisting customers in making informed choices based on quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers.

The Ozark Region existing training and referral system includes an individualized approach to providing training services. Education funds and training provider data are available for use on demand, creating the capacity for the region to respond to a broad array of training needs. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides customers, local services providers and WIB with access to information about approved education and training assistance and program cost data. The region service providers access training funds and training provider information through reports available by DESE. Training

provider data is maintained in an individual training referral report that is available to all customers through the regions service providers.

Consumer/performance report information that is available to staff and customers includes but not limited to: WIA and non-WIA students, number of enrollees, exiters, completers, exiters employed, completion rate, wage at placement to mention a few items. Customers and region service providers can also obtain information on the various training providers of said courses, description of courses, classes, as well as cost information.

B. Adult and Dislocated Workers

1. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of all adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local *

Eligibility Criteria for Adults: to be an eligible adult under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), an individual must meet all three of the following criteria:

- a. Be 18 years of age or over
- b. Comply with Selective Service legislation by providing documents to demonstrate compliance with Selective Service requirements.
- c. Comply with citizenship and eligibility to work requirements by providing documents necessary to validate the same.

See **Attachment 19**, Intensive Services: Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility Criteria.

Eligibility Criteria for Dislocated Workers: to be an eligible dislocated worker under Title I of WIA, in addition to meeting the requirements listed above for an eligible adult, an individual must meet any one of the four (A-D) following categories of eligibility.

A. Has been terminated or laid off, or who has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment; and

Is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; or

Has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that was not covered by State Unemployment compensation law; and

Is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation:

- Documentation of a decrease in the number of job openings for a particular occupation or industry during a recent period of time prior to the applicant's enrollment; or
 - Documentation that the applicant was laid off and has exhausted Unemployment Insurance and is still unemployed; or
 - Documentation that the applicant is long-term unemployed (unemployed fifteen or more of the last twenty-six weeks), still unemployed, and has been unable to find employment in his current occupation; or
 - Documentation provided by the Division of Workforce Development, local Chambers of Commerce, or other source which would demonstrate that a particular occupation or industry is declining; or
 - Documentation of a plant closing or permanent layoffs (of ten or more workers) within a 12 month period, (including the current layoff). Permanently laid off workers from the same industry or occupation that have experienced the closure or permanent layoff would be considered "unlikely to return"; or
 - Documentation from DWD that there is no current job order or that there appears to be an excess of applicants for a job order for occupation from which the applicant is laid off within the geographic area where the client is willing to accept employment.
 - MERIC/CHOICES information which indicates a declining demand for the occupation from which the applicant is laid off from within the geographic area where the client is willing to accept employment.
 - Documentation and file note that client is over age 40 and that age is a barrier.
 - Any other documentation approved by the Division of Workforce Development.
- B. Has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility, or enterprise; or
- Is employed at a facility where the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or
- For purposes of eligibility to receive services other than training services intensive services, or supportive services, is employed at a facility at which the authorized official of the company or the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close.
- C. Was self-employed but is unemployed as a result of:
1. natural disasters, or
 2. general economic conditions in the community where the individual resides

Self-employed individuals who are now unemployed or are in the process of going out of business due to general economic conditions include farmers, ranchers, professionals, independent trade people, and other formerly self-employed individuals.

Family members (including spouse and adult children), farm or ranch hands of self-employed individuals may also qualify as dislocated workers to the extent of their contributions to the enterprise that failed. Note: family members of formerly self-employed must provide documentation showing at least 50% of income came from the family business. Evidence of dislocation due to business failure can be attributed to “general economic conditions,” such as declining industries, current income compared with previous years’ income due to a change in demand for products or services, bank actions against a business, and natural disasters.

Natural disasters may include, but will not be limited to, a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, fire, earthquake, drought or explosion.

D. Is a displaced homemaker.

“Displaced homemaker” means an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family member in the home and who:

1. has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; and
2. is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty upgrading or obtaining employment.

Note: The definition of displaced homemaker includes only those individuals who are dependent on a family member’s income. Those individuals who have been dependent on public assistance may be served in the Adult program.

See **Attachment 19**, Dislocated Worker Services, Eligibility Criteria

Employment & Training Services

WIA provides for three levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: core, intensive, and training, with service at one level being a prerequisite to moving to the next level.

1. Core Services Menu

- Outreach and provision of information to inform potential adult and dislocated worker participants of Career Center services and eligibility for title funded services. These services are portable and will be provided as requested to those laid off in rural areas. Current orientation processes exist via Rapid Response, Center Triage,

Orientation Workshops, Group Initial Assessments, and other methods necessary to serve special groups and individuals. Additional information is provided regarding other services available through the Career Center such as those offered by FSD, Alternative Opportunities (AO), DWD, and other one-stop partner agencies.

- Intake and Eligibility Screening.
- Information on filing for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.
- Preliminary Assessment of Skill Levels.
- Labor Market Information.
- Job Leads and Placement Assistance.
- Education and Job Training Program Information, including the eligibility requirements of and services provided by such program availability and quality of such programs, and student financial assistance available for such programs.
- List of eligible training providers, (WIA Section 134(d) (2).
- Consumer information regarding schools/vendors. (WIA Section 134(d) (2).
- Performance Information about vendors/schools and local one-stop systems.
- Assistance in Evaluating Eligibility for other DOL Employment and Training Programs and CAP.
- Information relating to programs and providers of Dependent Care and other Supportive Services available in the local area.
- Soliciting and accepting job openings submitted by employers, and referring individuals in accordance with such openings via Greathires.org.
- Access to Resource Center: word processors (for resume and cover letter preparation); fax, copy machine, and telephones; job openings and placement information on the internet; labor trends, and other occupation -specific information. A computer diskette copy of the resume is provided upon request.
- Follow-up Services for at least 12 months.

Entry Requirements for Core Services: Core Services will be universally available to all adults and dislocated workers.

2. Intensive Services Menu

- Comprehensive Individualized Assessments for eligible adult and dislocated workers. Additionally, in-depth vocational assessments can be provided to adults and dislocated workers through Ozarks Technical College's Counseling and Career Resource Center.

- Development of Individual Employment Plans.
- Individualized Counseling and Career Planning.
- Case Management. Client-centered approach to delivery of services designed to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans and service strategies for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services. Adult and dislocated worker case files will contain the rationale for determination of need for intensive service.
- Assistance in the selection of education, training, and apprenticeship providers. Education and job training program information, including the eligibility requirements of and services provided by such programs, availability and quality of such programs, and student financial assistance available for such programs. Performance information about vendors/schools will be provided.
- Follow-up counseling for individuals placed in training or employment.
- Short-term pre-vocational work readiness workshops including the development of learning skills, communication, interviewing, basic skill refreshers and computer basics.
- Three, six, nine, and twelve month post employment retention follow-up.
- Specialized Employer Services to include screening and referral of individuals eligible for Missouri Job Development Fund (MJDF) Customized Training; On-The-Job Training (OJT); apprenticeships; customized assessment of skill levels of employers' current employees and workforce skill needs; and other specialized employment and training services such as Employer Workshops on specific topics as their needs dictate.

Entry Requirements for Intensive Services

Since funding is generally limited, the Ozark Region will determine the process by which any priority will be applied under WIA Section 134(d) (2) (E). Criteria may include availability of other funding sources, the needs of the specific groups within the local area and other appropriate factors.

To be eligible for intensive services, employed or unemployed individuals must meet one of the two following eligibility categories:

1. be unemployed, and
 - a. received at least one core service and has been unable to obtain employment through core service(s); and
 - b. determined by the One Stop operator to be in need of intensive services in order to obtain employment; OR
2. Be currently employed, and
 - a. received at least one core services; and
 - b. determined to be in need of intensive services in order to obtain employment or retain employment according to criteria for self-sufficiency (Attachment 16 & 16a).

Additionally, for those individuals whose intensive services are provided through the adult funding stream, priority will be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals. Low-income individual means an individual who:

- Receives or is a member of a family that receives cash payments under a Federal, State, or local income-based public assistance program;
- Received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, for a 6-month period prior to application for the program involved (exclusive of unemployment compensation, child support payments, cash payments as described prior, Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (ASI) benefits received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C.402] that, in relation to the family size, does not exceed the higher of –
 - The poverty line, for an equivalent period; or
 - 70 percent of the Lower Living Standard Income Level, for an equivalent period;
- Is a member of a household that receives (or has been determined within the prior 6-month period to apply for the program involved to be eligible to receive) food stamps pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 YU.S.C. 2011 et. Sequa.);
- Qualifies as a homeless individual, as defined in subsections (a) and (c) of Section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302);
- Is a foster child on whose behalf State or local government payments are made; or
- In cases permitted by regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, is an individual with a disability whose own income

meets the requirements for cash payment or income level requirements as described above, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.

- Veterans—In regard to veterans, the priority of provision of services is established as follows: First to be served will be public assistance recipients and low-income individuals who are also veterans. The second group to be served will be public assistance recipients and low-income non-veterans. Among participants who are not public assistance recipients or low-income individuals, veterans will receive priority over non-veterans;
- Second priority will be given to unemployed individuals who are not recipients of public assistance or low-income individuals but possess barriers to employment with those possessing the higher number of barriers being given preference to intensive and training services over those with fewer barriers.

Barriers will include the following:

- School Dropout (an individual who is not attending school and has not received a high school diploma or a GED);
- Basic Skills Deficient (Basic Skills Deficient means, with respect to an individual, that the individual has English, reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized assessment instrument or a comparable score on a criteria-referenced test);
- Offender (an individual who has a record of arrests or conviction of a misdemeanor felony);
- Older Individual (over 55 years of age);
- Long-term Unemployed (has not been employed for 15 of the past 26 weeks, concurrently or consecutively, including those that quit or have been fired);
- Limited English proficiency (inability to communicate in English for an individual whose native language is not English);
- Veteran (a person who served in active duty in the military, naval, or air service and was discharged separated, or released with other than a dishonorable discharge or was discharged or released from active duty for a service connected disability);
- Substance Abuse (an individual who abuses alcohol or other substances);
- Migrant and Seasonal Worker (an individual whose farm work experience during the preceding 24 months required travel such

that the worker was unable to return to his or her residence in the same day);

- Parenting Teen (an individual who is currently a teen parent or became a parent prior to reaching age 20); and
- Unique cases as approved by the Ozark Region staff and authorized by the Workforce Investment Board

3. **Training Services Menu**

- Individual Training Accounts
- On-The-Job Training (Per WIA Section 663.705), Attachment 21.
- List of eligible training providers (per WIA Section 134(d)(4))
- Consumer Information regarding schools/vendors (per WIA Section 134(d)(4))
- Coordination with other Grant Assistance Programs
- Customer Choice
- Identification of training-related financial assistance needs
- Case Management

Information will be collected on Outcome Measures. Toolbox will be used as the State Follow-up System for tracking participant outcomes and satisfactions. To ensure that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of services providers, information from CHOICES, MERIC and the DESE automated website will be readily available to customers interested in classroom training.

- The Ozark Region has made a practice of surveying participants and will continue to do so. Information gathered from customer satisfaction surveys will be reviewed on a regular basis as a means to ensure continuous improvement.

Requirements for Training Services: In the determination of eligible training providers, the Department of Workforce Development, City of Springfield, as the WIA Title I service provider, utilizes DESE to carry out WIA Section 122 activities within the Ozark Region including:

- Coordinating all training provider initial and subsequent eligibility applications;
- Making determinations of training provider/program eligibilities;
- Ensuring the State list is current, that all training providers and that each program on the list is approved;
- Collecting and verifying performance and cost information;
- Preparing/distributing training provider/program consumer reports;
- Processing individual training accounts, making payments and maintaining updated payment tracking information

To be eligible for training services, employed or unemployed individuals must meet all of the following:

- Have met the eligibility requirements for intensive services; and
- Have received at least one intensive service, and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment through such services; and
- After an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and case management, have been determined by the One-Stop Operator or One-Stop partner (in conjunction with the case manager), to be in need of training services and to have the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected training program; and
- Utilize information available from MERIC, CHOICES and the DESE automated website to select a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities either in the planning region or in another area to which the individual is willing to relocate; and
- Be unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, including federal Pell Grants established under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, or require WIA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance, including federal Pell Grants; and
- Be prioritized for occupations in demand in the labor market, or in a labor market to which the trainee is willing to move and has a plan for moving. An occupation in demand includes a job for which there is ordinarily limited demand, but the individual has a bona fide job offer contingent upon completion of training.
- Additionally, for individuals whose training services are provided through the Adult funding stream, if funding is limited, priority of service will be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals.

2. Include a description of the local individual training account (ITA) system and the procedures for ensuring that exceptions to the use of ITAs, if any, are justified under WIA section 134(d) (4)(G)(ii) and 20 CFR 663.430.

The Ozark Region fully utilizes the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to administer the functions of the individual training accounts for Adults and Dislocated Workers to ensure uniformity of training services on the local level and statewide. No exceptions to the use of ITAs have been necessary in the Ozark Region. If such exceptions were to occur, justification would be provided using WIA Section 134 (d) (4) (G) (ii) and 20 CFR 663.430. See Section VI.F for description of Ozark Region ITA systems.

3. *Provide a description of how Wagner-Peyser Reemployment Services (Worker Profiling) will be delivered on a weekly basis between the Division and partner staff.*

The worker profile program is part of the reemployment services offered by Wagner-Peyser. Weekly, individuals who are likely to exhaust their UI benefits before finding employment are called in for more intensive services. These individuals are more than likely dislocated workers who have been part of a mass layoff due to a downturn in the economy or as a result of businesses closing to relocate out of the United States. During this process a needs based assessment is performed and referrals are made to WIA Dislocated Worker Program or Trade Act as appropriate

C. Rapid Response

*Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as appropriate.**

The local One-Stop Operator shall provide a staff person to coordinate Rapid Response services throughout the local area and the State. The Rapid Response Coordinator shall be completely knowledgeable of all local dislocated worker procedures and services and have above average communication skills. They will also have experience promoting and marketing programs and/or services to the public and to employers. The Rapid Response Coordinator's primary duties shall be Rapid Response. The Rapid Response Coordinator's duties and daily activities, as outlined in this document, shall take precedence over all other program duties or activities. The Rapid Response Coordinator shall perform any and all duties associated with State and local closures and/or layoffs as outlined in this document.

Upon approval of the WIB, the One-Stop Operator will designate the Rapid Response Coordinator as the contact person for all Rapid Response activities within the local area. The One-Stop Operator will notify DWD by June 30 2005, of the name and location of the Rapid Response Coordinator. The One-Stop Operator will also notify DWD in writing of any change in name or location within 10 days of any such change. Notification shall include rationale for any such change. DWD shall have final approval authority of the individual designated as the Rapid Response Coordinator person. DWD staff will assess the ability of the Rapid Response Coordinator person and may recommend corrective action. In addition, the One-Stop Operator shall submit the name and phone number of an alternate contact person to ensure adequate Rapid Response throughout the local area and the State. The alternate RRC shall be knowledgeable of local dislocated worker services and procedures and shall be required to make presentations to employers or affected workers when the primary RRC is not available.

The One-Stop Operator shall provide training to the Rapid Response Coordinator (and alternate if desired) regarding the State's and the local area's responsibility in Rapid Response efforts. Such training shall be provided within the first 60 days of the Rapid Response Coordinator's employment. The Rapid Response Coordinator shall attend any Rapid Response training or WIA related training arranged or provided by DWD. The Rapid Response Coordinator shall be thoroughly knowledgeable of local area WIA dislocated worker services.

In addition to the responsibilities as the local area's designated Rapid Response Coordinator, the Rapid Response Coordinator shall:

1. Be responsible for coordinating Rapid Response activities and conducting RR meetings within the local area whenever a company lays off 10 or more employees up to 49. Such coordination shall include:
 - a. Initial contact with the company to explain services and attempt to schedule employee informational meetings.
 - b. Contact the Division of Workforce Development Rapid Response Coordinator at DWD Central Office in Jefferson City to inform them of any scheduled RR meetings.
 - c. Contact Missouri State Labor Council representative, if the affected employees are represented by a Union, to inform them of any RR meetings. If a Transition Team is established, the RRC will provide a presentation regarding the specific dislocated worker services during the Transition Team training.
 - d. Arrange any informational meetings for affected employees and ensure that all necessary information is presented (i.e., United Way, Department of Social Service (DSS), Mental Health, Fast Track, Career Options). The RRC will establish linkages with other agencies in the community to provide supportive services (i.e., Dept. of Mental Health, local credit counseling services). During the employer meeting, the RRC will identify which of these agencies should be included in the Rapid Response presentations.
 - e. The Rapid Response Coordinator will compile and submit a quarterly report to DWD describing the Rapid Response presentations given within the local area. The report will include the name of the company, number of employees affected, date of contact with the company, employer and employee meeting dates and the estimated number of employees in attendance at the Rapid Response meeting (s). Also included will be a list of other dislocated worker activities the RRC has performed. Electronic reports will be submitted to DWD by the 15th of the month reflecting the previous quarter's activity.

- f. The Rapid Response Coordinator will establish contact with community agencies, employers, chambers of commerce and other social services organizations in the local area. In response to notification of a layoff or closure, the RRC will provide the above agencies with information regarding services the State Dislocated Worker Unit, and the Department of Economic Development can provide. The RRC will also suggest ways in which local community agencies can provide assistance for the affected workers and the community. In the event of mass layoffs or closings, the RRC will assist the State Dislocated Worker Unit in coordination of community services.
 - g. The RRC will collect surveys from employees attending RR meetings. Surveys will collect data such as types of services employees are interested in as well as employee information (name, address, etc.).
 - h. Following a State-Level Rapid Response, (50 or more workers), the Division will assign a closure code to each group of workers, which will be entered into Toolbox. The RRC will access Toolbox to determine the proper code and take necessary action to ensure the code is used on all forms for workers laid off from each company. A code will assign only to dislocation involving 50 or more workers and all North American Free Trade Adjustment Act-Trade Adjustment Act (NAFTA-TAA) approved petitions.
- 2. Immediately notify the State Dislocated Worker Unit of any layoffs affecting 50 or more employees. DWD is designated as the State Dislocated Worker Unit. The Rapid Response Coordinator will not contact the company except at the direction of the State Dislocated Worker Unit. In those instances where 50 or more people are affected or the number affected is undetermined or affected by NAFTA, the initial contact should be made by DWD. Additionally, the Rapid Response Coordinator shall be available to assist the DWU in any State level Rapid Response including:
 - a. The RRC will attend employer meetings, scheduled by the State DWU, within the Ozark Region to explain available WIA Dislocated Worker services.
 - b. Present information at any employee meetings scheduled by the DWU. If the Rapid Response Coordinator cannot attend, the contracting agency Director or Rapid Response Coordinator will delegate Rapid Response to the alternate contact to present information. The RRC will consistently present dislocated worker services information at RR meetings. Staff other than the RRC may not consistently present dislocated worker services information at RR meetings without prior approval from DWD. If staff, other than the RRC, will be presenting program information more

often than the designated RRC'S, documentation will be submitted to DWD for consideration with an explanation and reason for not requiring the RRC to conduct presentations. The primary Rapid Response Coordinator shall be the sole presenter of information about local dislocated worker services, unless the primary Rapid Response Coordinator is unavailable due to emergency or other significant conflict.

- c. Coordinate the delivery of dislocated worker services to nonresidents laid off within the local Region. Coordination will include the development of non-financial agreements between local areas to ensure that services are comparable.
- d. Provide follow-up services to all laid-off workers following employee informational meetings. Follow up shall include an informational letter to each employee within 15 working days of the meeting, to all laid-off workers who have not accessed services. An additional contact may be initiated 30 days after the layoff. If necessary, an additional contact may be initiated 60 days after layoff. To accomplish the above outlined follow up, the Rapid Response Coordinator shall be responsible for obtaining a list of affected employees from the company or union. If the company or union does not provide a list, local areas, through the State Dislocated Worker Unit liaison, may request client information such as names and addresses of workers affected by specific layoffs or closings.
- e. Prepare an application for additional funding should a layoff occur within the local area of sufficient magnitude as to place undue strain on the local area's existing dislocated worker budget. Application shall include at a minimum, data reflecting unemployment, current layoffs, current and projected enrollments and expenditure levels and narrative sufficient to justify the need for additional funds, planned activities and their relationship to the local area's current WIA plan. Additionally, a proposed budget and participant summary must be submitted. Any applications for additional funding shall conform to any regulations issued by the Division of Workforce Development and/or the Department of Labor.
- f. Prepare any narrative and data requested by DWD in preparation for application for the Secretary of Labor's WIA Discretionary Grant Funds. This will include gathering all information for the Grant proposal at the direction of DWD, including employee and employer surveys and all necessary budgets. When more than one local area is included in the development of a grant, the Division of Workforce Development will designate a specific local area as a local administrative lead. The lead local area will coordinate with other local areas and summarize all grant

information and budgets containing the requested elements as required in the grant application guidelines.

3. Additionally the Rapid Response Coordinator shall:
 - a. Be available to present information as requested regarding Rapid Response efforts within in the local area.
 - b. Distribute employee surveys at each Rapid Response meeting and forward to DWD upon request.
 - c. Attend any AFL/CIO's Workforce Reduction Committee meeting within the local area.
 - d. Assist DWD with any feasibility studies funded within the local area.
 - e. Assist the Department of Economic Development in gathering information on a company or its workforce when requested by DWD.

Customer Centered Workshops shall be offered when the layoff affects 50 or more workers. To provide effective pre-layoff and post layoff services to all WIA eligible dislocated workers, a customer-centered workshop will be made available to dislocated workers affected by a layoff or closure. The workshop will be shorter term in nature (one day), provide current labor market information, job seeking skills, interviewing techniques and practice, job application instructions and practice, and provide a written resume, when possible, on a computer diskette for each participant.

Coordination with other one-stop partner workshops shall be scheduled by the One-Stop Operator within the local area.

The RRC will be familiar with the stages of dislocation and the stress associated with layoff. The RRC will briefly discuss this subject in the RR presentation; and, if the need is identified, arrange for stress workshops to be held at a later date.

As a part of the overall dislocated worker program coordination responsibilities, the Rapid Response Coordinator shall assist in providing the local area's other core, intensive, and training services. These activities include outreach and intake, job or career counseling, assessment, determination of occupational information, labor market information, job clubs, job search, job development, orientation, forms completion including eligibility/Toolbox forms, data entry, test administration or related activities, when other duties as outlined above are not

requiring the RRC's full attention. Decisions on RRC activities in these categories may vary according to changing local need.

D. Youth

- 1. *Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth activities in the local area, including an identification of successful providers of such activities.* (This should include the local board's policy on partnering with and prioritizing services for serving youth most in need, such as out of school youth, those at risk of dropping out, youth in foster care, those aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farm worker youth.)***

Activities

1. Core services – services universally available to applicants regardless of income or eligibility status, as outlined previously herein.
 - a) Types of services – this may include assisting applicants in obtaining information about agencies, resources and services, assistance in self-help activities, self-directed job searches, filing U/I claims, etc; offered through One-Stop Career Center system and local agencies.
 - b) Service Provider role – the youth service provider staff will provide youth applicants and participants with access to the locally designated one-stop core services.
2. Comprehensive Services – services that are beyond information or self-help in nature, and require eligibility determination and enrollment for participation, in such service/activity.
 - a) Intake and Assessment Activities
 1. Eligibility determination – a determination/decision concerning applicant's eligibility for program enrollment and participation. The applicant must meet the following:
 - a) be age 14-21 years
 - AND
 - b) be a low income individual
 - AND
 - c) have an identifiable barrier to education or employment (from a list of qualifying barriers)

2. Objective Assessment – an assessment to determine applicant's current skills and needs, to include the following:

a) assessment of the applicant's:

- (1) academic levels
- (2) skills level
- (3) service needs

Such an assessment shall include a review of the applicant's:

- (a) basic skills (including basic literacy skills as described in WIA section 101)
- (b) occupational skills
- (c) prior work experience
- (d) employability
- (e) interests
- (f) aptitudes
- (g) developmental needs
- (h) supportive service needs

3. Individual Service Strategy – a strategy (plan of services) developed to meet the educational and employment goals of each individual participant.
4. Program design/structure – to provide key educational and occupational learning, preparation for employment and linkages to employers and the job market.

b. Year-round Activities (minimum program elements that shall be provided under the act)

- 1. Tutoring (leading to the completions of a secondary school or its equivalent)
- 2. Study Skills (leading to the completions of a secondary school or its equivalent)
- 3. Instruction (leading to the completions of a secondary school or its equivalent)
- 4. Drop-out Prevention strategies (leading to the completions of a secondary school or its equivalent)
- 5. Alternative Secondary school services
- 6. Summer employment opportunities (directly linked to occupational and academic learning)

7. Paid and unpaid work experiences (including internships and job shadowing)
 8. Occupational skill training, as appropriate
 9. Leadership development opportunities (including community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility and positive social behaviors)
 10. Adult Mentoring (for a period not less than 12 months including participation and a subsequent period of time).
 11. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling
 12. Support services
 13. Follow-up services (after participants completion for not less than 12 months)
- c. Information and referrals – each applicant or participant (that meets minimum income criteria to be considered an eligible youth) shall be provided:
1. Information on the full array of applicable or appropriate services available through the local board, eligible providers and/or one-stop partners
 2. Referral to training and education programs that have the capacity to serve the applicant either on a sequential or concurrent basis

The Ozark Region Youth Services, in cooperation with other agencies, will prioritize services for those youth most in need, such as out-of-school youth, those at risk of dropping out, youth in foster care, those aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth and seasonal farm worker youth as demonstrated by the groupings below.

The Youth Council of the Ozark Region will solicit the participation of various youth agencies and the local provider will establish partnership to adequately respond to the needs of those youth most at risk. Those agencies are:

1. Division of Youth Services (DYS) Work Experience Project – a partnership which allows youth in their custody to participate in a paid work experience component.
2. Missouri Mentoring Program – a program which allows us to dual-enroll and provide additional mentoring support to assist youth who need tutorial assistance, teen parents in need of mentoring and a job coach
3. Jobs for America's Graduates JAG – a national program assisting at risk youth in the development of job skills, job searching techniques, paid work experience and drop-out prevention. We will collaborate with this program and seek dual enrollment when the client benefits.

4. Boys and Girls Club – a national program given to assisting youth in their communities. We will provide services in the communities where youth are defined as most at risk.
5. Big Brothers/Sisters – working with the mentors provided for the youth in their program we will assist with the work component providing job shadowing and work experience subsidized experiences.
6. CHAFEE Foster Care Independence Program – this program assists those youth between the ages of 15-21, who are experiencing out-of-home placement. It encourages the youth to make vocational choices within the limits of their desires and capabilities. We will partner to provide work readiness seminars, the work experience and GED assistance. The goal will be to assist youth in their choice of vocation, military and/or training.
7. Other agencies, such as Planned Parenthood, Pregnancy Care Center and Building Blocks, will be programs with which we partner to address the needs of those youth that are parenting/pregnant. We will develop our services to respond to this group and their particular needs.
8. Parole Officers – we have and continue to develop a partnership with the parole officers representing the counties of Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney and Webster we service. We will offer our services to those that have been identified as offenders and assist them in obtaining their GED and work experience.
9. Rare Breed – A group that works with homeless youth and assists them in finding transitional living and assists with GED and we would seek to build relationship with those youth enrolled in that program.

Eligibility Requirements-In order for applicants to receive services, they must meet eligibility guidelines through the documentation of key socio-economic factors and the identification of educational and employments barriers, as outlined below.

1. Age-be age 14 through 21 years (cannot have reached 22 years before program enrollment).
2. Low Income status-be a low income individual who:
 - a) receives (or is a member of a family that receives) cash payments from a federal, state or local income-based public assistance program (TANF).
 - b) receives (or is a member of a family that receives) Food Stamps (or has been determined eligible to receive in the past 6 months)
 - c) qualifies as a homeless person (IAW Stewart McKinney Act)
 - d) is a foster child (on whose behalf state or local payments are made)

- e) an individual with disability (as per ADA) whose own income meets TANF income levels or income criteria, but is a member of a family whose income does not meet requirements
- f) received a total income (or a member of a family that received income) for the previous six month period, (not including UI, child support, TANF or cash assistance, social security old-age or survivor benefits) not to exceed the higher of:
 - 1) the poverty line or equivalent (as per OMB) (for an equivalent period of time)
 - OR**
 - 2) 70% of the LLSIL (for an equivalent period of time)
 - AND**
 - 3) Barrier(s) – An individual that is one or more of the following education/employment barriers:
 - a) deficient in basic literacy skills
 - b) a school dropout
 - c) a homeless, runaway or foster child
 - d) pregnant or a parent
 - e) an offender
 - f) an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or secure and hold employment. (This has been further defined by the local Youth Council as needing assistance to complete a secondary school education (or its equivalent) or a post school certification of 2 years or less. Documentation may include school, counselor or medical records, or a referral from other programs or agencies verifying the need for assistance. In the case of employment assistance, employment records and/or work history may also be included in this documentation.)
- 4) Appropriateness – An applicant must show that they are likely to benefit from such services by improving their abilities or skill levels in one or more of the barriers identified in their OA/ISS (from the list above).
- 5) Applicants not meeting enrollment requirements – Youth providers shall ensure that eligible participants who do not meet enrollment requirements of a program, or who cannot

be served, shall be referred for further assessment and programs to meet the basic skills and training needs of the applicant.

- 6) Exceptions – Not more than 5% of participants assisted and enrolled may be individuals who do not meet the minimum income criteria. To be considered an eligible youth, those who do not meet income criteria must fall within one or more of the following categories:
 - a) a school dropout
 - b) basic skills deficient
 - c) educational attainment is one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the age of the individual
 - d) pregnant or parenting
 - e) a disability, including learning disability
 - f) homeless or runaway youth
 - g) offenders
 - h) other eligible youth who face serious barriers to employment (separately defined by the local Youth Council and WIB as: those with a poor work history (unemployed for 13 weeks or more in the past 6 months); poor work retention (3 jobs/employers or more in the past 6 months); underemployed (working less than 520 hours in the past 6 months; or, earned less than \$6.00 per hour average over the past 6 months); needs additional assistance in obtaining occupational or vocational skills and /or training; or other similar documented barrier, as identified in the discretion of the youth provider staff.)

2 Provide a description of any innovative service delivery projects for youth currently operating in the region. Describe the local board's involvement in the projects, and the board's efforts to continue involvement and funding for the continuation of these projects. (Examples include JAG, Youth Build, I Can Learn, Cisco etc.)

The following narrative describes the intent of the Workforce Investment Act, the local WIB and Youth Council in what the individual program services are envisioned to address, and a general concept of their delivery to the participant. The Act includes three program design components and ten program elements (services), described herein, which constitute comprehensive services available under this act.

1. Program Design Components

- a. Objective Assessment – each participant determined eligible and enrolled shall receive an assessment that determines the individual's:

- 1) Academic levels
- 2) Skill levels
- 3) Service Needs

In order to adequately determine this, at a minimum, the following shall be reviewed and assessed:

- 1) Basic skill: including basic literacy skills; defined as:
 - (a) computes or solves problems, reads, writes or speaks English at or below grade level 8.9

OR

- (b) is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the family.
- 2) Occupational Skills- the skills and levels required to perform a job or trade.
- 3) Prior work experience – the record of all paid or unpaid work experience.
- 4) Employability – the skills, attitudes and interest in obtaining or maintaining employment.
- 5) Interests – curiosity or willingness to learn about an occupation and/or industry.
- 6) Aptitudes (including interest and aptitude for non-traditional careers).
- 7) Developmental needs – needing additional training and/or counseling to obtain the physical or mental capacity to perform certain vocational and/or social skills at acceptable levels.
- 8) Supportive service needs – needs to assist the participant in participating or maintaining participation in educational or employment services.
- 9) Current enrollment in other programs, services and involvement with other agencies.

(NOTE: a new assessment is NOT required IF determined appropriate to use a recent assessment conducted for another educational/training program, this decision is made by the youth services coordinator.)

- b. Service strategies – an individualized service strategy (plan of action/achievement) that shall identify, at a minimum:
 - 1) an employment goal (including non-traditional employment, if appropriate)
 - 2) strong linkages between academic and occupational learning
 - 3) preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities
 - 4) effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to:
 - (a) the job market
 - (b) local and regional employers
 - 5) Occupational skills training will be another service provided for the youth who are enrolled. A list of DESE approved credentials will be made available to interested youth and funding will be used to assist youth in obtaining a credential which will lead them to employment and/or further education.

The individualized service strategy will be our tool that guides how services are determined and it will be changed upon completion of goals to ensure that youth are assisted on their road to self-sufficiency. Upon attainment of their various credentials, diploma and work, we will determine if there are other services which can be offered.

- 2. Program elements/services – all services will be directly linked to the needs of the individual based upon their Objective Assessment (OA) and Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). The act requires that a minimum of one element/service be delivered to each participant, plus mandatory follow-up services. It further envisions that most individuals will participate in multiple service elements. The local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) encourages participation in additional services beyond the minimum required. It will be the intent of the Youth Services Provider to actively review any “dual enrollment” possibility, and pursue such status.
 - a. Tutoring – one-on-one or group assistance in core academic subjects to assist the participant in completing an educational program. This may be help in knowledge, theoretical concepts or skills. The Youth Services Provider will develop a “bank” of tutors who are accessible through-out the 7 county region, thus creating greater opportunity for support and success. This will be achieved by the service provider developing relationships with local schools, churches and other community based organizations/services to provide individual tutors and/or group

assistance where possible.

- b. Study Skills – one-on-one or group workshops and training sessions establishing key principles of academic success, time management and study skills/techniques, to assist participants in completing an education program, excluding that contained in GED instruction.
- c. Instruction – guidance, counseling and assistance to keep eligible youth in instructional classes leading to completion of a secondary school education, resulting in a diploma. This will be accomplished by developing relationships in each county with the schools, community based organizations/services and local congregations to ensure that youth have adequate assistance or access to other services on a daily basis.
- d. Dropout prevention strategies - identification of key risk factors for each participant that may lead to dropping from an education program. A strategy of milestones and goals to maintain educational progress will be developed jointly by the participant and appropriate staff. Utilizing the ISS and OA we will determine from the interview process and on-going active case management those areas which are risk factors and establish realistic short-term and long-term milestones and goals to ensure that the youth has the necessary support and assistance in reaching their milestones and goals which they and their Career Manager have jointly identified

For those youth who are dual enrolled in youth services and the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program, they will receive much of this needed support through JAG and their Career Manager. Each youth enrolled will be encouraged on the road to self-sufficiency to consider occupational skills training, military services and/or entering the workforce. Youth will assist in all three options and WIA funds will be utilized based on need and other resources shall be available as deemed necessary and helpful to the youth.

- e. Alternative secondary school services – youth who attend alternative secondary schools and are determined eligible, shall be offered participation in any appropriate service available to assist them in continuing their education program or to gain work readiness skills, occupational skills or entry into unsubsidized employment.

Classes leading to completion of a state approved secondary school equivalency diploma (GED). An alternative education program for high school drop-out participants aged 16-21 years, designed to provide coordinated and centralized services to meet the academic and counseling needs of school dropouts. The program includes a minimum of twelve (12) hours of class time weekly, which will be conducted at the existing local grant sub recipient site, or other Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) approved local ABE site.

The program will operate year round, with the goal of an average duration of participation expected to be 4-6 months. Priority for enrollment will be given to individuals who are school dropouts with the goals of higher education, further skill/occupational training and/or entry into unsubsidized employment, as identified in their ISS.

Competency levels to be achieved shall be a minimum of 80% mastery of four out of five areas (scales) as measured by the GED or pre-GED exam, or by youth obtaining their state approved GED certificate. Youth shall test periodically during participation in instruction to determine their progress.

- f. Academic Enrichment Activities and Occupational Skills Activities—Academic enrichment activities shall also be available to participants through local school programs and special training projects designed to emphasize academic and occupational learning in a work context. The youth service provider will seek to provide opportunities that will assist the youth in hands-on experience in areas of interest. These year-round activities will assist the youth in occupational skills training experience which can be added to their resume. Successful completion which includes 90% attendance, class assignments completed, and job-shadow experience will result in an opportunity for a Summer Employment Activity which would be a paid experience. This is designed to assist all participants enrolled in the program.
- g. Paid and unpaid work experiences - opportunities for a variety of work experiences will be made available to participants. Work experience opportunities will be designed to give the participant exposure to positions within the business community of their interest. Both paid and unpaid work experience will be evaluated and must be clearly documented in the ISS.
- h. Occupational skill training – this may be accomplished through dual enrollment in Adult services for use of ITA funds, if

appropriate. This may also include career exploration activities, attendance in classes resulting in attainment of general job skills and certifications, or assisting with training costs for specific occupational training leading to a certificate of skill attainment, completion or a degree.

- i. Leadership development opportunities – program activities designed to instill and enhance positive behaviors. This may include such activities as:
 - 1) post secondary education exposure
 - 2) community and service learning projects
 - 3) peer-centered activities
 - 4) Organizational and team training
 - 5) Decision making
 - 6) Citizenship training
 - 7) Positive social behaviors

A youth that is enrolled in secondary school and/or has attended GED for 45 days and/or participated in WEP for 45 days will be given the opportunity to participate in Leadership Activities through the year round program operated by the Youth Services Provider. Leadership Development training opportunities will be available on a rotating basis with different subjects, activities and projects on a monthly/quarterly basis. Resources utilized to accomplish this highly critical component will be agencies such as Missouri Mentoring, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs of America and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG).

- j. Adult mentoring – a participant will be matched with an adult who will teach them the basic skills of a trade and/or general life, coping and employability skills, for a period of not less than 12 months, including the time before and after program participation. These adult mentors will come from the previous youth agencies mentioned and local community and faith-based organizations. The youth service provider will provide the training and reporting necessary to demonstrate that the youth is actively participating in a mentor relationship.
- k. Comprehensive guidance and counseling – guidance and counseling shall be provided as it pertains to educational, occupational and life skills counseling to all participants. Referral to professional services may be made on a case by case basis if the need arises for professional counseling. As previously stated the youth provider will seek to develop relationships with organizations in the counties served to offer this component.

- l. Support services – all participants may receive supportive services based upon need and availability, according to their OA and ISS. Participants must apply to local area agencies and resources for supportive services before receiving any such services from WIA funded activities. These are services to assist them in participating or maintaining participation in WIA services, and may include such services as child care costs, transportation, housing, tuition, clothing, etc. Please refer to the Support Service Policy found in VI-A for a detailed explanation.
- m. Follow up services - all participants shall receive follow up services for a period of not less than 12 months. These may be as intensive as needs dictate from the OA and ISS. Follow up may include any youth service or program (except GED instruction or ITA funds) to assist the individual in meeting their education or employment goal, but shall include at a minimum, tracking the participant's progress toward their goals, as identified in the OA and ISS. The service provider will provide an adult mentor (refer to Adult Mentor section) to all youth involved in follow-up services. The follow-up consists of monthly contact made by the follow-up Career Manager and the Mentor a minimum of two times per month. A case note will be entered by the Career Manager which will detail the results of the meeting.

E. Business Services

1. ***Implementation regarding achievement of coordinating business outreach efforts through a single point of contact system. Describe how partner staff work together to “broker” all programs and services to businesses. Include a description of strategies/training to ensure partner staff document business contacts in toolbox and work closely with all career center staff that has business outreach responsibilities. Describe innovative and/or outreach success (es) that may be considered best practice. Describe any modifications/revisions to the business outreach plans that were submitted to the Division during 2004.***

The Business Outreach and Service Plan are co-coordinated by the Ozark Region Business Representative and a WIA-funded Implementation Team member. The responsibility of the Business Services Representatives (BSR) is to contact businesses and provide them with the array of services that are outlined in our Business Outreach Marketing Plan.

Revised September 27, 2005

The Ozark Region will actively coordinate with DWD Central Office Business Relations staff to avoid duplication of incumbent worker (Classroom & OJT) and other industrial training programs.”

Several small groups with different assignments carry out the goals and objectives of the plan. The Business Services Representative Team is one of these small groups. The State Business Representative for the Ozark Region, four Veterans Representatives, two WIA Workforce Development Specialists, two WIA OJT Job Developers and two Job Developers from other partner agencies make up the Outreach Committee. Job Order Job Placement Staff work with this Outreach Committee as well. They call employers and receive incoming calls from businesses needing assistance with Great Hires. They also broker business services by making referrals to the Outreach Committee to work in person with a business. Like all other Business Service Representatives, they are responsible to document their contacts with appropriate and timely Toolbox entries.

The Outreach Committee holds planning meetings twice a month. These meetings provide an opportunity for outreach and marketing planning. These meetings are led by the co-coordinators. These meetings usually include review of our plan, discussions on Toolbox problems, Toolbox training, presentation of success stories and discussions on economic trends, key industries, training needs and continuous improvement review. One outcome of these meetings is to help partners avoid duplication of contacts and services and facilitate the “**single point of contact**” goal.

One goal of the plan was to hire a Marketing Coordinator and a Graphic Assistant. These positions are needed and may be filled if funding becomes available.

No external reporting and tracking systems were used during the last year. As a result the Outreach Committee depends exclusively for communication about business services on Toolbox entries. The Team recognizes that Toolbox can not generate all reports that are required to document the achievement of the goals laid out in “Measure of Success” outlined in the plan.

A key player in the Business Services Outreach Plan is the Ozark Region’s State Business Representative. Besides individual employer clients, the BSR is a very active participant in many Chamber of Commerce and economic development activities; keeps staff informed about activities that the Career Center should support; Coordinates the Expo/Trade Show events in which the Career Center actively participates; and coordinates a quarterly multi-regional planning meeting between partners who serve businesses in southwest Missouri. These meetings provide important opportunities for communication

about area businesses, area economic development and business services provided by the Career Centers in each Region. This activity enhances our goal of having a single **point of contact** in the Southwest and Ozark Regions.

Those businesses being served by the OJT Job Developers are businesses that fall into one of the six key industries identified in our plan. Those industries were selected during the planning phase because they are growth or stable industries in our Region; they require a skilled, educated workforce; they employ a significant number of workers in well paying jobs; and they use technology in their operations. Both Job Developers identify businesses in key industries that they plan to contact and recruit to participate in the OJT program. A business can be pre-approved for OJTs so OJT eligible participants can be referred to them for an interview. OJT Job Developers may also contact appropriate business on behalf of an individual dislocated worker who is interested in training in a specific occupational area.

The partner providing WIA-funded Youth Services also has two Job Developers who contact businesses much the same way as OJT Job Developers. They create a strategy to both pre-approved businesses for youth work experience sites and they develop work experience sites for specific clients based on their barriers to employment, career exploration needs, geographic location and other factors identified in their IEPS.

The Veteran Representatives are assigned businesses based on geographic location, industry clusters and needs of Veteran job seekers.

WIA-funded Workforce Development Specialists actively work in specific counties. They act as a liaison between the Career Center and businesses in order to promote the Career Center to businesses by initiating and participating in a broad range of networking groups made up of business owners. They also provide economic development services, training services and job applicant screening and referrals.

Reports are made to all staff regarding contacts and to share information with staff and partners, actively encourages all staff, including partners, about the needs of businesses contacted through networking efforts.

During the first year of the plan, three training activities were developed for all partner's staff. The learning objective was to inform all training participants about the programs of all other partners so the "**single point of contact**" goal could be met and all employment and training services could best be appropriately brokered to the business customer. Customer service enhancement training was also provided for all partner staff who serves the business customer. At the end of June, 2005, all partner staff received an opportunity to attend training provided by MTI. This training was designed to teach positive, enthusiastic approaches to selling to the business customer.

The Team, as well as the rest of the Career Center staff undertook a number of new activities during the year, which were identified as “best practices.”

- a. The Team recruited a variety of partner staff to represent the Career Center at many special business related activities throughout the Region. The staff was selected to participate in the business awareness events based on their area of business expertise and their experience relating to the individual key industry clusters identified in the plan. These included Chamber of Commerce and economic development events, trade shows, ribbon cuttings and business networking activities sponsored by various communities in the Region.
- b. Several WIA Workforce Development staff made planned visits to neighboring regional Career Centers and educational institutions. The goal of these visits was to identify the best program successes. Each visit culminated with a written summary of best practices of business services in each Region. Those findings were distributed to Career Center staff. Our goal was to share information and identify successes in other Regions that, if implemented in our Region, might result in value-added services to our business customers.
- c. Career Center staff worked with off-site partner staff to develop a day long staff training event, the goal of which was to facilitate the exchange of program information between partner organizations, identify partner’s areas of expertise for business services, emphasize the “**single point of contact**” objective, build stronger relationships between partner staff and build enthusiasm for delivery of quality customer service. The training was developed around the theme of the reality TV show Survivor. This was a hands-on training and was well received by staff. A video tape of the event was made for evaluation purposes and is available to new staff and the WIB.
- d. A “best practice” yet to be completed is the production of a business practices manual that can be shared with small business customers who do not have a human resource department. This manual will include templates and instruction on activities like writing job descriptions, building career ladders, writing affirmative action plans or implementing safety and security plans for their worksites. This document will be outlined and on a CD.
- e. The most recent accomplishment of the Implementation Team was the design of the Business Services Room in the Career Center. The remodeled room now houses state of the art technology for businesses to access at no charge. It also houses training materials, human resource periodicals and books. The Business Services room is set up in a

conference- room style so employers can use the space for meetings, screening applicants, conducting interviews and other business. The Business Services Room is being well utilized by businesses and partners.

The Ozark Region Business Outreach and Marketing Plan has been modified since the Plan's inception one year ago. Changes occurred as a result of our continuous improvement process or because of funding issues. To a certain extent, this did delay the start up of plan implementation. In January, the implementation schedule was reviewed and modified prior to the annual performance review by the State Continuous Improvement Team.

2. Describe the region's commitment to businesses and how the training needs of businesses will be addressed, including implementing incumbent worker and On-the-Job Training programs. Include a description of how these services will not duplicate and will coordinate with Missouri's incumbent worker and industry training programs.

The Ozark Region Missouri Career Center remains committed to providing outstanding business customer service including creating innovative training services for area businesses. Presently the Dislocated Worker Program is operating an On-the-Job Training Program. Recently two companies successfully completed OJT contracts. Two more companies are pre-approved but have no active training contracts at this time. Presently two other companies are completing OJT applications. The average OJT training wage was \$12.50 per hour.

At present the local WIB has not approved the implementation of an incumbent worker program funded with WIA dollars. Presently one OJT Job Developer is working with a large health care provider in our Region to develop career ladders for nursing. An incumbent worker program may facilitate the process of moving low paid WIA-eligible employees into training that will move them up their career ladder. A career ladder system can create backfill training opportunities for WIA eligible programs including the youth program.

Job Developers have a strong working relationship with the local community college. We receive copies of customized training applications so we will be familiar with the training plan and avoid duplication of training services. We frequently refer employers to the local customized training provider.

F. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

Describe how the region will support the Missouri Re-entry Process (MRP) ex-offender initiative. Include the services to be provided for ex-offenders and the process to be used to identify employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

When referrals are received from the Department Of Corrections on the Missouri Re-entry Process, clients are given an appointment date and time, within five days of being released. During this appointment an individual employment plan will be completed with long and short-term goals as well as plans to overcome employment barriers. Individuals will be provided job development services, referrals on job orders and referrals to supportive and/or training services as needed. Local employers have been contacted in an effort to develop a list of employers who are willing to work with ex-offenders. Career Center staff will work closely with Probation and Parole staff to assist ex-offender clients in obtaining gainful employment and becoming self-sufficient.

G. Strategies for Faith-based and Community-based Organizations

Describe those activities to be undertaken to: (1) increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the one-stop delivery system; and (2) expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the one-stops in the state. Outline efforts for conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce investment system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the local workforce investment area to help meet the objectives of WIA. (For more information, reference DOL's tool, Making It Real: Strategies for State Agencies and Local Workforce Boards to Increase Partnerships with Faith-Based and Community Organizations.)

The Ozark Region has developed strong linkages with our community-based organizations. We have a 30-year history with the Ozark Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC) as a service provider and partner with Experience Works and numerous linkages with other community organizations, i.e. Community Partnership of the Ozarks, and Boys & Girls Club, among a few. The Ozark Region will continue to enhance those relationships while developing stronger linkages with faith-based entities within the communities. The Ozark Region also has strong referral ties and partnerships with the Council of Churches and the Kitchen, as well as the Ozark Food Harvest.

X. Local Administration

- A. *Description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area.****

We recognize the Performance Indicators (required by DOL in the State Plan which, in turn, are passed thru to the local Workforce Investment Areas) as set forth herein. The Proposed Method for Establishment of WIA Performance Outcomes (Attachment 6 to the Missouri WIA State Plan) will be used, as appropriate, in the development of Ozark Region specific Performance Outcomes. The state level negotiation process has been completed and PY 2005 and 2006 Final Negotiated WIA Performance Measures for the Ozark Region are set forth in **Attachment 25**. Other local performance indicators may be developed and implemented at the direction of the Council of Local Elected Officials and Workforce Investment Board as may be deemed appropriate.

Performance Indicators Adult and Dislocated Workers

1. Adult Programs
 - Adult Entered Employment
 - Adult Employment Retention
 - Adult Earnings Change
 - Adult Employment & Credential
2. Dislocated Workers
 - DW Entered Employment
 - DW Employment Retention
 - DW Earnings Replacement
 - DW Employment & Credential

Performance Indicators Youth

1. Youth 14 through 18 Categories
 - Younger Youth Skill Attainment
 - Younger Youth Diploma Attainment
 - Younger Youth Retention
2. Youth 19 through 21
 - Older Youth Entered Employment
 - Older Youth Employment Retention
 - Older Youth Credential

We also recognize the requirement for the measurement of customer satisfaction for both employers and participants and have developed and implemented a process whereby satisfaction is captured and measured using survey instruments and/or other means as may be appropriate, per the following:

Performance Indicators Satisfaction Measures and Indicators

1. Single Customer Satisfaction Measure for Employers for the WIA Title I, subtitle B programs for adults, dislocated workers and youth.
2. Single Customer Satisfaction Indicator for Participants for the WIA Title I, subtitle B programs for adults, dislocated workers and youth.

The Ozark Region One-Stop Operator is dedicated to maintaining a customer-centered culture in the workforce development system. Special emphasis is placed on providing quality services to assist customers in achieving their desired outcomes, which includes the job seeker and the employer. Customer input is the key driver in helping the One-Stop Operator determine and confirm customer priorities, requirements and overall satisfaction with services. The Operator recognizes that customer relationships are tantamount to our ability to improve programs and services. To implement improvement and services within the One-Stop, the Operator will apply the concepts of Total Quality Management (TQM) throughout the operation of WIA services. It will be a desired goal that all partners of the One-Stop Center implement the concepts of Total Quality Management to help ensure a seamless delivery of services. This could include, but not be limited to, the gathering of data through the use of customer satisfaction surveys via telephone and/or paper, focus groups and other means as directed by the local WIB and the Council of Local Elected Officials. The three (3) primary questions in the satisfaction survey may be:

- Rank your overall satisfaction with the services provided from the Missouri Career Center on a scale from 1 to 10? (1-Very Dissatisfied to 10-Very Satisfied)
- Considering all of the expectations you may have had about the services, to what extent have the services met your expectations? (1-Very Dissatisfied to 10-Very Satisfied)
- Think of an ideal program for people in your circumstances. How well do you think the services you received compare with the ideal set of services? (1-Not Close to Ideal to 10 – Very Close to Ideal)

NOTE: The Ozark Region, specifically the Department of Workforce Development, has utilized a customer satisfaction tool for many years. The three questions listed above are included in each customer satisfaction

instrument along with other “yes or no” and “fill in the blank” feedback points that include: 1) was the staff helpful? 2) Was the staff courteous? 3) What did you like most about coming to the Center? 4) What suggestions do you have for improvement? And 5) how did you find out about the Career Center?

B. An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 117(d) (3) (B) (i) (III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 117(d) (3) (B) (i).*

Contracts between the City of Springfield and another governmental entity or Workforce Investment Area, which are not subject to the RFP process, are negotiated on a cost reimbursement basis.

The City of Springfield, Department of Finance, has four positions administratively designated to conduct business/oversight responsibilities as the Fiscal Agent/Grant Recipient for Workforce Investment Act funds. These positions include the following:

- Workforce Development Accounting Supervisor
- Workforce Development Accounting Technician
- Workforce Development Accounting Services Representative (2)

The City of Springfield’s designation as Fiscal Agent/Grant Recipient is consistent with action taken by the Ozark Region, Council of Local Elected Officials (CLEO), effective July 1, 2000, with the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and designation by the Governor of the Ozark Region within the State of Missouri. It is anticipated that re-affirming approval action of the Fiscal Agent/Grant Recipient designation will take place by the Council of Local Elected Officials at their meeting scheduled for August, 2005, at which time they will complete their review and approval of this 2-Year Plan.

C. A description of the competitive process used to award the grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under subtitle I of WIA, including the process to procure training services for youth (reference DWD Issuance 03-02) and any that are made as exceptions to the ITA process.*

Competitive Process for Awarding Local Area Grants and Contracts

1. Direct WIB designation or certification of Service Providers, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official: Service Providers, including the local One-Stop Operator(s), shall be designated under an Agreement between the WIB and a consortium of entities that includes at least three or more of the required One-Stop partners as identified in WIA Sec. 121(d).

2. Utilization of Procurement Guidelines as prescribed by Federal Circular and the *City of Springfield Purchases Manual*: Procurement standards at the local level are regulated by the Federal Circular applicable to the entity making the procurement. The City of Springfield's purchasing policies are followed, with the most prescriptive policy prevailing, for the procurement of goods and services, including the process to be used to procure training services that are made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account Process (WIA Section 134(d)(4)(G)) should they exist. The RFP process outlined herein shall be used to identify a Youth Services Provider(s) for the Ozark Region, with a subsequent contract(s) developed between the provider of services and the City of Springfield.
3. Request for Proposal Process: As appropriate and consistent with governing procurement guidelines, the Request for Proposal process may be used to select vendors for services as set forth in the WIA 2-Year Plan of Services. This process is systematic and well-documented and contains the following actions, as appropriate.
 - WIB Policy on Selecting Service Providers
 - Scope of Work and Bid Process
 - Public Notice on RFPs (via mailings & major newspaper legal notices)
 - Bidders Conference (where appropriate)
 - Review Process
 - Selection Process
 - Co-location Orientation (if appropriate)

Statutes for competitive procurements exceeding \$25,000 require public advertising in a medium available to the general public (i.e. newspapers) and that bids be solicited from prospective suppliers. The City of Springfield has recently started utilizing an electronic posting service. Requests for proposals/invitations for bids are electronically posted on Demand Star by Onvia to alert participating suppliers. Bid requests are also posted with 24 hour access on the City's web site

http://www.ci.springfield.mo.us/egov/finance/bid_center/html
to promote open and competitive competition within our procurement practices.

The Request for Proposal document sets forth the scope of services to be provided, information to be submitted by Offerors, cost constraints, period of performance, evaluation criteria, related items and time frames for submission of Offers.

Responsive proposals are evaluated by an Evaluation Team using the evaluation criteria and matrix as set forth in the RFP document. Evaluation criteria includes, among other things, the following: performance goals; cost constraints; quality of training; participant characteristics; service levels and service needs of selected populations; key organizational characteristics; the effectiveness of the Offeror in

delivering comparable or related services based on demonstrated performance, in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training and characteristics of participants; and overall quality of proposal.

Evaluation outcomes are reviewed by the Workforce Investment Board, Youth Council (if applicable) and Council of Local Elected Officials who make the final decisions regarding the selection of service providers. Contracts are then negotiated between the City of Springfield and the selected service provider(s).

Contracts between the City of Springfield and another governmental entity or Workforce Investment Area, which are not subject to the RFP process, are negotiated on a cost reimbursement basis.

D. *Describe how the local region is working towards eliminating duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments.*

The Ozark Region strives for non-duplicated administrative costs at the service provider level through coordinated and integrated services which are described in great detail at Section VII, within this document. The City of Springfield, as a major consortium partner, minimizes costs associated to infrastructure services that include legal, personnel, purchasing, utility and financial related services at no charge to the WIA programs as in-kind. The value of utility cost savings is captured monthly in the form of Stand-in Costs on behalf of the WIA funded programs. A single subcontract relationship also helps to minimize administrative costs associated with the delivery of youth specific services by minimizing oversight and monitoring administrative costs.

E. *Identify how the local region ensures that services are not duplicated.*

The Ozark Region has developed a Service Mapping Matrix, which identifies services provided by each agency. This matrix (**Attachment 21**) is used by the Region to reduce duplication of services and streamline service delivery. Service integration is strongly encouraged within the Region. Core services, such as resource room assistance, workshops, etc. are provided through a team approach, with WIA and Wagner-Peyser funded personnel providing services.

The Ozark Region has excelled at coordination of services to job seekers and employers through its Marketing/Outreach Business Ambassadors Team. Our Business Outreach and Services Plan received statewide recognition ensuring businesses are provided coordinated single point of contact services. This plan is discussed in greater detail at section IX, E.1.

F. *Establish and define the local policy and procedure for Complaint and Grievance in accordance with the WIA Act 20 CFR 667.600. (This policy should be incorporated into the MOU and disseminated throughout the*

Region for all workforce development professionals to understand and implement. This should adhere to federal, as well as state complaint and grievance guidance.) Include a copy of this policy as Attachment 4 to the local plan.

WIA COMPLAINT GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION

(Reference Attachment 4 for copy of WIA Complaint/Grievance Procedure)

Protected Category: Only those complaints filed on the basis of discrimination against a protected category of individuals are subject to processing via the WIA Complaint Guide. These include complaints on the basis of: *race, sex, national origin, age, citizenship, political affiliation or belief, color, religion, disability, and participation.*

Protected Individuals: Anyone who visits or works in a site where WIA funds are used to support staff, equipment or the facility is protected under the WIA Complaint Guide. This includes WIA staff and customers, partner activities operating within the facility; 4-week reporters, etc. If no WIA funds are used to support an office or if customers at no time have *any contact* with WIA-funded staff, they are not protected under these procedures.

- Protected individuals may file a formal complaint of a protected category with the local, state or Federal Civil Rights Center.
- Protected individuals may file formal complaints of a protected category under the State-issued WIA Complaint Guide but will normally be required to exhaust local agency procedures before escalating to the State system.
- In the event a formal complaint of a protected category is filed under local agency procedures, notification of such filing must be submitted to the Missouri Career Center EO Officer.
- Copies of the Complaint Guide should be distributed to all protected individuals (i.e., staff and customers who have a customer or personal file of any nature) who shall sign an Acknowledgment of Receipt, which receipt shall be retained in the protected individual's file and is subject to State audit.

Availability of Complaint Guide: All full-service or satellite locations where WIA funds are used to support staff, equipment or the facility must stock the State-issued **WIA COMPLAINT GUIDE**, which must be made available to anyone who visits the site.

Equal Access to Services:

- Limited English Proficiency

- The full array of services offered to English-speaking populations must be equally available to non-English speaking populations.
- Interpreters must be made available to non-English speaking populations as needed to ensure equal access to services.
- Locations with non-English speaking population(s) of 10% or greater must display signs and posters in the language of such populations (Spanish, Asian, etc.)
- Signage and posters should be displayed in English and Spanish.
- Hearing/Visually Impaired
- The full array of services offered to the general population must be available to hearing-impaired and visually-impaired customers.
- Interpreters should be provided/available at the site where services are available to accommodate the needs of impaired customers.

Documentation

- Notification of formal complaints of a protected category filed at the local agency level shall be submitted to the Missouri Career Center EO Officer. (Required information: complainant name, address, telephone, date complaint was filed, basis of the complaint, description of complaint)
- Final resolution and/or disposition and date shall be provided the Missouri Career Center EO Officer once the complaint has been resolved or referred to another level.
- The Missouri Career Center EO Officer shall maintain a Discrimination Complaint Log inclusive of all formal complaints reported and/or filed and shall submit same to the State EO Officer.
- Grievances which are not filed on the basis of a protected category should be processed in accordance with local agency procedures but no formal report to the Missouri Career Center EO Officer is required. Documentation and a record of disposition should be retained by the local agency.
- Designated Missouri Career Center EO Officer : Alma Price
(1514 S. Glenstone, Springfield, MO 65804
Phone: 417-887-4343
Fax 417-887-1892)

G. *Include the Planning Budget Summaries for Program Year 2005 and Fiscal Year 2006 in Attachment 5 to the local plan.*

- Copies of Planning Budget Summaries for Program Year 2005 and Fiscal Year 2006 are provided as Attachment 5 and are based on actual allocations received from the State of Missouri, Division of Workforce Development for PY05/06.
- Copies of Planning Budget Summaries for Program Year 2006 and Fiscal Year 2007 are provided as Attachment 5A and are estimated based on actual allocations received from the State of Missouri, Division of Workforce Development for PY05/06.

Attachments to the Local Plan

1. List of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and Affiliate Sites
2. Local Workforce Investment Board Membership List
3. Local Workforce Investment Board By-Laws
4. Complaint and Grievance Guidelines
- 5/5A Planning Budget Summaries for Program Year 2005 and Fiscal Year 2006
6. Memorandum of Understanding (signed by all the parties)
7. Performance Improvement Plan
8. Skills Gap & Skills Shortage Survey
9. Skills Gap Report
10. Skills Gap Planning Consortium Members
11. MERIC Projected SOC Occupational Employment in Ozark Region
12. Apprenticeship Training Program
13. WIA Adult Supportive Service Policy
14. WIA Dislocated Worker Supportive Service Policy
15. WIA Youth Supportive Service Policy
- 16/16A Self Sufficiency Policy
17. ITA Supplemental Worksheet
18. DESE 6-Individual Training/Referral Account
19. Intensive Services Eligibility Criteria
20. On-The-Job Training (OJT) Policy
21. Service Mapping
22. Demographics by County
23. Labor Force Data
24. Poverty Map

****Denotes WIA-Mandated Planning Requirements***

Public Comment Process

Prior to submission, the local plans shall provide notice to the public of the plan's availability for comment. Local regions are expected to involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIA service providers and other stakeholders in the review of this plan. To ensure as many individuals as possible have an opportunity to comment, notice should also include any known groups representing the diversity of the population in the region. This public comment period shall consist of 30 days.

Plan Submission Process

Deadline for local plan submissions will be August 31, 2005. A hard copy of the plan, with original signatures, as well as an electronic copy in Microsoft Word is required.

The hard copy should be sent to:

Division of Workforce Development
Planning and Research
P.O. Box 1087
421 E. Dunklin Street
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1087

The electronic copy should be sent to:

flowers.clint@ded.mo.gov

Plan Review Process

Once a complete plan has been submitted, the state anticipates a 30-day review process by the state's Local Plan Review Team. Formal notification of the plan's approval will be sent to the local workforce investment board (WIB) chair and a copy sent to the local WIB's staff director. The new local plans will be effective October 1, 2005.

Local Plan Modification Procedures

Upon DOL approval of the new state WIA/Wagner-Peyser Act Plan, the Division of Workforce Development (the Division) anticipates replacing DWD Issuance 01-00, Change 3, with a new local plan modification procedures issuance. The new issuance will reflect the elements of this local planning guidance.